INDIAN CULTURE IN THE DAYS OF THE BUDDHA

BY

A. P. de ZOYSA, B.A., Ph.D. (Lond.)

of Gray's Inn Bar-at-law

Late Examiner in Oriental Languages to the Universities of London and Cambridge



COLOMBO

M. D. GUNASENA & CO., LTD.

M. D. GUNASENA & CO. LTD.
217 Norris Road Colombo

First Published July 1955

Printed and Published by M. D. Gunasena & Co. Ltd., Colombo—R-1763-3/54

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

ANCIENT INDIAN civilisation and culture have undergone so many changes and modifications that it is no easy task to trace the state of society in India during the days of the Buddha.

Gotama, the Buddha, lived about two thousand five-hundred years ago. There is no recorded history of that period. The edicts of Emperor Asoka and other monuments, together with the archaeological discoveries, corroborate the evidence of references to ancient India by the historians of other countries. Histories of Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Tibet, China, Japan and other countries into which Buddhism was introduced at different periods, leave records and references to Buddhist India. The traditional teaching of the Buddha and the mode of life, customs, art and literature of the Buddhist countries keep up the early Buddhist traditions even up to this day. In Ceylon, Burma and Siam, Buddhism is well established.

In tracing the history of ancient customs and institutions in most nations in Asia, it is not difficult to discover the influence which Buddhism had on them. Ancient Indians had a civil dress similar to the Roman toga. The Buddha and his disciples evidently wore that dress. The Buddhist monks continued to wear it. In all Buddhist countries we find the form of the ancient dress still kept up with very little modification or alteration, while the dress of the ordinary people in those countries has undergone changes and transformations.

Buddhist Indian traditions are confirmed by the scriptures. These scriptures which are called the *Tripitaka*, though written after the death of the Buddha, are regarded by the Buddhists as the words of the teacher as handed down by his chief disciples. The subject matter of these scriptures contains many references and allusions to the mode of life of the people, their ways of thinking and their activities. Hence the scriptures form the most reliable source of information relating to the days of the Buddha.

To see that ancient society in its proper perspective it is necessary not merely to sift and select the relevant facts from the vast amount of information embodied in the scriptures, but also to apply the critical method of inquiry before attempting to generalise.

In the literature of a country the poets and other writers have recorded, though not consciously, the social history of their times.

Sometimes a word or a phrase will be a sufficient clue to reveal subject matter of importance to the historian or to the anthropologist. When we deal with ancient literature special interpretation of certain passages becomes necessary, since the writers of different ages had their peculiarities of expression. Some of their allusions and references are not clear. Their humour and their subtlety of thought and expression are sometimes lost to the modern reader of ancient texts. Another danger to be avoided in research work of this nature is the tendency to attach etymological meanings to words which in their usage had different meanings. The word "deva" originally connoted the idea of a god. In the Buddhist scriptures the word is used in several senses so as to include the ruler of the people and also enlightened persons. The word "aryan" was used to indicate a cultured or enlightened person and not a race. The Buddha speaks of his disciples as "Arya-putta" meaning thereby "cultured" sons. Similarly the words "Ariyo attangiko maggo" mean the eight-fold method of the cultured.

The difficulties of interpreting ancient scriptures can be overcome to a large extent by reference to commentaries and traditional explanations The unwritten laws and the observance of certain customary practices are handed down from generation to generation. Such customs and usages considerably help in the proper understanding of the scriptures.

The traditional mode of life followed by the Buddhist monks shows with what care very ancient customs are kept alive. The precepts laid down by the Buddha for the members of his Order define in detail the mode of life which embodied many a custom of the Buddha's own day. Also the same precepts give an insight into the life of those times. Scanty records of pre-Buddhist India and those of the period after the Buddha throw light upon the India of the Buddha's day. The influence of the Vedas on the life and customs of that time is evident. So is the influence of Buddhism on the subsequent period. Megasthenes and the Chinese writers such as Fa Hien confirm the facts which are disclosed in the Buddhist scriptures regarding the life and customs of Buddhist India.

To judge India according to the Buddhist scriptures is to come to the conclusion that the Buddha lived in the Golden Age of India. In culture of the mind, in the freedom of both men and women, and in social progress and prosperity, India at that time had attained a high standard. That was the period when India gave to the world a philosophy which subsequently influenced the life and thought of most of the civilised peoples of the age.

CULTURE OF THE MIND

FREEDOM, TOLERANCE and intellectual movements in the days of the Buddha were essentially favourable for religious, social and philosophical speculations. People in all conditions of life took part in public matters. Women were not kept aloof. Differences in points of view were accepted and tolerated. Various schools of thought on religion and philosophy contended with one another with enthusiasm. The religious teachers looked for adherents to their precepts or dogmas. The philosophers put forward their theories on cosmology, world systems and the soul.

The social reformers preached against the existing social evils. Some teachers had established centres for their teachings, while others travelled throughout the country to propagate their doctrines.[1] Their aim was not to convert a select few, but to teach the general public. It is significant to remember that the method of most of the teachers was persuasion by appeal to reason. Hence there was no bloodshed, riots or rebellion among the adherents to different schools of thought.

Those early disputants and theorists served the useful purpose, so far as they were able, of sharpening the intellect and deepening the thought of the people. The inevitable result of such early training was that when the Buddha began to teach, he found an audience advanced enough to understand him.

From the clouded atmosphere of speculation on vain dogmas, the Buddha directed the attention of the people to matters which explained the mode of life that tended to real happiness. It was the material comforts that were generally considered to be the chief source of pleasure. With such an ideal before them the ancient Indians had accumulated wealth. In the days of the Buddha while the rich lived in luxury, the poor groaned under the struggle for existence. Side by side with the great prosperity of the country there was much suffering and discontent. Those who lived in luxury discovered that the very pleasures they indulged in were a cause of boredom and dissatisfaction. They tried in vain to find the purpose and the meaning of life. Old age,

1. Paribājakas

decay and death were noted as the undesirable and unavoidable obstacles to the enjoyment of the pleasures of life. For life's sufferings no teacher had so far found a rational remedy.

Led by the compassion for humanity, the noble Prince Sidhartha, the heir to the throne of the Sakyans, left his royal comforts and went in search of the cause of human suffering. Although he visited the reputed teachers and philosophers, they were not able to satisfy him with their theories. They explained suffering as the work of God, taught him to pay penance and torture the body to expunge sin. The searcher after knowledge, like other honest believers of his day studiously followed the strenuous practice until he was nearly starved and tortured to death. With the realisation of the futility of such practices, he began to think independently. He attained enlightenment and discovered the cause of suffering. Then he was known as the Buddha, the enlightened teacher, who was able to show the people the path to perfection and enlightenment.

The Buddha taugh tthat the cause of suffering should be looked for in the sufferer. He taught that people suffer or enjoy according to the results of their actions in their past and present lives. The sum total of the reactive effect of the activities of the past and the present determine the future. The only way to remove suffering and to attain to perfection and enlightenment is by one's own effort. Sacrifices and prayers to gods were pointed out to be in no way useful to remove human suffering. The striver after the true happiness of perfection and enlightenment should first of all remove the cause which produces suffering. The conditions of this cause are selfish cravings, passions such as anger, hatred, ill-will, jealousy, lust and ignorance. Selfish cravings are to be destroyed by realising the truth of suffering, passions by loathsomeness of the impurities of one's own form ; ignorance by investigation of the real aspects of so called existence and the universe.

Man's happiness or unhappiness is a subjective state of mind. Hence the attainment of happiness is possible only by the culture of the mind. The obstacles to mental development are the attachments to sensual pleasures, based on, greed, hatred, wrong view, delusion, pride, conceit, envy, shamelessness, recklessness, sloth, torpor, selfishness, doubt, perplexity and distraction which keep the mind in bondage. The mind freed by breaking the fetters can be cultivated by the Buddha's method which is termed by him " the eight-featured method of the cultured".[1]

1. *Ariya Attangika Magga*

This method, which only the Buddha teaches to the world, is not a theory but a practice. It is also described as the "middle path" which teaches the avoidance of extremes of sensuality and asceticism.

The method demands that the striver after enlightenment should have the right view[1] so as not to be led astray by delusions and deceptions through wrong views and opinions. Then he should have the right aspiration,[2] which consists in aspiring for the path and fruition of deliverance. The right view enables him to discard the wrong ideas of salvation. Such views being untainted with greed, hatred and delusion, give rise to feelings of liberality, amity and higher knowledge. The right speech[3] is to avoid falsehood, slander, abusive language and frivolous talk and to use true, kind and correct words. The right action[4] is to refrain from killing, stealing, defilement through sensual pleasures, and from the use of intoxicants. Acts of service and charity, learning the truth or teaching it to others are examples of right action. The right mode of life[5] is a life of avoiding ten kinds of wrong livelihoods. The right effort[6] consists in the avoiding of the pain of the body by changing the four postures and in the four-fold right efforts of the mind leading to mindfulness of mind and body. Such efforts consist in the attempt to prevent evil thoughts, words and deeds, to remove the ills that have already arisen in the mind, to develop right thoughts, deep insight, energy, keen interest, tranquility, deep concentration and equanimity, and to maintain and bring to perfection the developed qualities. The right mindfulness[7] is contemplation on the visible form, feeling, consciousness and mental factors, continually like the ticking of a watch for the acquirement of right concentration. The right concentration[8] is to make a deep examination into the nature of existence and to remove selfish craving, passions and ignorance, to be free from lust, anger, indolence and doubt, and to acquire the cultured mental serenity which consits in concentrated perfection, equanimity and freedom from sensual pleasure or pain.

According to another analysis of the method, perfection and enlightenment are to be attained by leading a virtuous life,[9] by the control and purification of the mind,[10] and by the development of true knowledge and wisdom.[11] A teaching based on mental culture of this nature can

1. *Samma-Ditthi*
2. *Samma-Sankappa*
3. *Samma-Vaca*
4. *Samma-Kammantha*
5. *Samma-Ajiva*
6. *Samma-Viyayama*
7. *Samma-Sathi*
8. *Samma-Samādhi*
9. *Sila*
10. *Samādhi*
11. *Paññā*

only be practised by the members of a highly evolved society. The less evolved people cling to bodily comforts as the highest pleasures of life. The culture of the mind and the pleasures to be derived from the cultured mind can only be known to a society at a highly developed stage of its existence. The best way to judge the progress of society is to make mental culture the standard. Consequently the superiority of one race over another depends on the mental advancement of the people.

The emphasis laid in the Buddha's teaching on the culture of the mind is remarkable. On one occasion the Buddha taught that: "Mind is the fore-runner of all actions and therefore it is supreme",[1] and on another he said: "Indeed, brother, the world is led by mind, is influenced by mind, and by the power of the mind it continues". Based on this teaching of mental development the public accepetd the principle that a person should be honoured according to his mental culture and the consequent purity of his life. The King's nobles and the citizens of all classes were not reluctant to honour those who had devoted their lives exclusively to the attainment of enlightenment.

The Buddha had converted Angulimala, a well-known murderer and robber, into a man of noble character. When Pasenadi, King of Kosala, was asked by the Buddha what he would do to the notorious robber and murderer Angulimala, if he saw him leading a good life as a striver after perfection and enlightenment, the King said, "I will honour him and protect him."[2]

Also the King of Magadha made a proclamation to protect the disciples of the Buddha by giving them a dispensation so that they might not be arrested. Such was the respect shown to those of great mental attainment and purity of character.[3]

With the growth of public esteem and respect for those striving to attain enlightenment, "the eight featured method of the cultured" became popular and men and women began to practise the new method of mental culture.

A special feature of the Buddha's teaching was the demonstration that the mind could be trained so as to acquire super-normal powers[4] such as celestial eye, celestial ear, reading the thoughts of others, etc. The Buddha instead of allowing such powers to be considered miracles showed how it is possible for anyone to acquire special mental powers. Here the people discovered something to strive for. The method of

1. *Dhammapada*
2. *Anguttara Nikāya* II. XIX,
3. *Angulimala Sutta*
4. Abhinyanas

revealing the hidden powers of the mind was a startling discovery and those who achieved such mental powers were ready to teach others how to attain them. A detailed account of the method of acquiring special psychic powers is given in the Buddhist scriptures dealing with acquirement of supernormal states.

By thus reducing what the people held to be superstition to natural, and by showing what were considered inspirations and revelations to be acquisitions, the popular faith in gods was shaken. The Buddha's method and its practice proved that gods are not necessary to attain to the highest achievements. He denied the immortality of the gods since they are themselves liable to impermanence and suffering.

With the spread of Buddhist thought people became iconoclasts and dispensed with temples, priests, rituals, vows, sacrifices and prayers.

The Buddha pointed out to Amagandha, a reputed Brahmin teacher, that "neither the flesh, or fish, nor fasting, nor nakedness, nor tonsure nor matted hair, nor dirt, nor wearing skins, nor worshipping fires, nor the many continual penances, nor sacred hymns, nor oblations, nor sacrifices, nor observance of sacred days, purify a person who has not conquered his 'doubt'."[1]

Ritual, vows and sacrifices to gods was an important part of religious worship during the Buddha's life in India. Buddha preached against the existing practices to enable people to dispense with futile practices which lead the mind astray. It was essential that such religious rites should cease before the mind could be free to be properly trained.

The Buddha's teaching was that the individual has to get enlightenment with determined effort, and enlightened men become persons of veneration and honour even by the gods (devas).

The chief features of this enlightenment are: It was a teaching intended to make man greater than his gods. The novelty of the teaching itself was sufficient to attract public attention. The Buddhists openly declared themselves in no way inferior to gods for they had realised that they had the potentialities to make themselves even superior to gods. Hence the popular fear of the gods was removed. This removal of fear and the servility of mind is essential to the culture of the mind. The mind tainted with fear and servility cannot break the fetters that keep the mind in bondage.

Prior to this teaching, and even during the days of the Buddha, there were different sects who worshipped gods and hoped to propitiate them

1. *Sutta Nipatha*—Amagandha Sutta

and avert their anger by sacrificing animals. When the King of Kosala had an awful dream, according to the advice of the Brahamin priests he began to sacrifice a large number of animals.[1]

"Let there be slain for sacrifice so many bulls, so many steers, heifers, goats and rams. Let there be felled so many trees for sacrificial posts. Let so much kusa grass be cut to strew round the place of sacrifice".[2] Such was the order of the Brahmin priests. This sacrifice was avoided by the timely visit of the Buddha who persuaded the King to become one of his followers.

With the spread of Buddhism the kings used to penalise the killing of animals. The Emperor Asoka, the Great, through his edicts prohibited the slaughter of animals. One edict says : " This Dharma-lipi has been caused to be written by King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the Gods. No life should hence be immolated and offered as a sacrifice."[3]

The sacrifices to the gods by the priests and other practices in the name of gods had at that time enslaved the minds of some people with superstition. Removal of superstitions from the mind was a preliminary step to real mental culture.

When the futility of sacrifices was realised by the people a new humane movement was introduced by extending kindness and compassion even to the dumb and helpless animals. Prevention of cruelty to animals became a social institution nearly two thousand five-hundred years ago.

By discarding the worship of gods, the Buddhist Indians do not seem to have lost anything either morally or mentally. It was considered a greater service and a more important duty to help and honour their fellow-men and women than to worship gods. The Buddhists directed their energy to uplift the fallen and the less fortunate. The daily meditations of universal love,[4] compassion,[5] appreciation[6] and indifference[7] towards pleasure and pain took the place of prayer.

A general idea of the culture of the time can be gathered from the account of what was accepted as things worthy of rejoicing. When there were differences of opinion as to what were the true blessings of life, the Buddha, being questioned, summed them up thus :—

"To avoid the company of the fool and the wicked,
To associate with the wise and the virtuous,

1. *Maha Supina Sutta*
2. *Kandaraka Sutta*
3. Asoka Rock Edicts I.
4. *Mettha*
5. *Karuna*
6. *Mudita*
7. *Uppeksha*

To honour those worthy of honour,
To live in a land where righteousness prevails,
To have been the doer of the deeds of merit,
To be well established in virtuous self control,
To be well versed in arts and sciences,
To be of well disciplined behaviour,
To speak kind and sensible words,
To support one's parents,
To look after wife and family,
To have an honourable means of livelihood,
To be generous in gifts,
To do acts of merit,
To help one's kith and kin,
To be blameless in action,
To be free from acts of demerit,
To abstain from intoxicants,
To cause no delay in acting according to truth,
To revere and obey (parents and teachers),
To be contented,
To be grateful,
To listen to the true teaching at the proper time,
To be patient,
To admit one's faults,
To meet enlightened persons,
To inquire into the true teaching at the proper time,
To have control over the senses,
To be chaste,
To discern the four great truths of the cultured,[1]
To strive to attain to perfection and enlightenment,
To have a mind unmoved by prosperity or adversity,
To be free from suffering,
To be free from the ills of life (selfish cravings, passions and ignorance), and
To be serene and peaceful in mind."[2]

The absence of the idea of a deity in no way lowered the ethical standard. On the other hand, the absence of the superstitious theories about gods left the mind free for development and the building up of

1. Suffering, the cause of suffering, destruction of suffering and the way to destroy suffering
2. *Maha Mangala Sutta*

character. It is only in an enlightened age and in an equally enlightened society that the people will have courage to entertain the view that man is greater than his god.

According to Buddha, the perfectly enlightened person is the highest being. To him even the greatest of gods pay homage. The enlightened men are themselves devas, a class of gods. The supernatural beings who are known as gods are not superior to the enlightened men. To a people who had faith in gods this teaching must have been shocking. But when people understood the Buddha's teaching they feared neither god nor devil and yet lived a life of service and virtue.

The practice of this teaching enabled people to develop unselfish characters. Their mental achievements, their love of liberty and freedom, and their uprightness created a distinct culture which subsequently influenced practically the whole of Asia, until other influences polluted or removed that culture.

PERSONAL FREEDOM

BUDDHISM HELPED to develop the conceptions of liberty, freedom and tolerance existing at the time. The religious fear of gods and punishments was removed by the doctrine of the enlightened man's superiority over gods and by the theory of responsibility attached to each individual action.[1] Religious rites and sacrifices were swept away by the realisation of the futility of such practices. Belief in divinity and priestcraft were reduced to insignificance by Buddhist rationalism.

The mode of life preached and practised by the Buddhists created a humanism which had a strong hold on the people. The wealth and energy that were wasted on gods began to be spent on the culture of the mind and on social services. In place of temples for the gods, large residential institutions for those devoted to psychical training and teaching were established and maintained at great expense. Jetavanā-rāma, Purvā-rāma and Isipathanā-rāma and many places of the same type, were built as residences for strivers after enlightenment in the suburbs of well-known cities of the powerful kingdoms. When worthless people of the towns began to seek entrance to those residences in order to get an easy living, rules and regulations had to be introduced to exclude them.

The Buddha taught that living beings, with the exception of the enlightened, are sufferers. Their sufferings depend on their cravings, passions and ignorance. The rich and poor alike were proved to be such sufferers. Hence in the midst of a short life's suffering there is no room for pride, prejudice or tyranny. With this ingrained suffering in life as a common factor, the Buddha established that no one has the right to interfere with the life of any living being. Everyone has a right to live and nobody has the right to take away that life. This proposition advanced by the Buddha, while establishing a fundamental ethical principle relating to life, made people considerate and respectful for the lives of others.

The prevailing tolerance of the people was strengthened by Buddhist compassion for the sufferings of the people. The Buddha attributed

1. Doctrine of *Kamma*

wrong views and wicked actions to ignorance. Hence the thoughts and deeds of the ignorant were regarded with pity and compassion. The method of reducing ignorance was to educate the people and train their minds. In order to do this the Buddha and his disciples travelled over different parts of India teaching the doctrine of enlightenment and compassion.

With the arrival of the Buddhist missionaries in different countries, the new teaching became acceptable to all those whose minds were developed enough to understand and appreciate it. That humanism had a direct effect in uniting the people with love and affection instead of dividing them into petty sects under deities. "May all beings be happy"[1] was the common cry of the Buddhists. This universal love was the soundest basis on which individual liberty could be built in any progressive society, for such love breeds mutual regard and respect.

The Buddha was one of the earliest propounders of the equality of man. During his day slavery was not known in India. Megesthenes was impressed by this fact. The same writer tells us further this remarkable fact about India, that all the Indians are free, and not one of them is a slave. The Lakedaemonians and the Indians are here so far in agreement. The Lakedaemonians, however, hold Helots as slaves, and these Helots do servile labour ; but the Indians do not even use aliens as slaves and much less a countryman of their own.[2]

The Buddhist scriptures speak of several classes of servants, but there is no reference to slaves. When castes came into being there was nothing to be identified as a slave caste. The caste system as it exists today is the outcome of Brahamin priestcraft. It is based on the ancient class system. The Buddha laid the foundation to free society from the social evils of the class system which hindered individual progress. To a proud Brahamin the Buddha said : "For whosoever, Ambattha, are in bondage to the notions of birth or of lineage or the pride of social position, or of connection by marriage, they are far from the best wisdom and righteousness. It is only by having got rid of all such bondage that one can realise for himself that supreme perfection in wisdom and in conduct."[3]

He preached that people are not to be honoured according to their birth but according to their actions.[4] Those perfect in purity of life and enlightened through mental culture were the most worthy of

1. *Sabbe Satta Bhavanthu Sukhi-thatha*
2. Fragm. XXV. Strabo XV.
3. *Ambattha Sutta*
4. *Vasala Sutta*

honour and respect, and the attainment of that honour was open to all without any distinction. As his disciples he admitted into his order kings and queens, ministers and brahmins, wealthy nobles and great merchants, philosophers and religious teachers, princes and princesses physicians and lawyers, barbers, carpenters and scavengers. Men and women of all conditions of life lived in the same residence, moved in harmony together and worked for the same ideal of enlightenment and of teaching and helping the ignorant. From powerful kings to the poorest subjects, all began to honour the members of the Buddha's order. The then prevailing notions of superiority of certain classes of people according to their trades or professions were shattered by the creation of an order into which all classes of men could be admitted.

This conception of man's equality was readily followed and applied in other spheres of social activities. In the appointments for responsible posts, the candidates were selected according to their ability and practical experience. The kings began to employ as their ministers able and talented men from any class. People were rewarded according to their talents and character. Fitness for the work was the guiding principle in the selection of archers, warriors and wardens of cities.[1] Special talent was recognised and equal chances were given to compete for coveted positions in the state. The royal musician, Guttila, trained a pupil who challenged his teacher to a musical contest, for he who proved himself to be the best musician in the kingdom had a right to be appointed as the royal musician. The ability was decided by a public contest, where the old musician defeated his ambitious pupil.[2]

Individual achievements were encouraged by the recognised freedom of the individual. Once a poor boy earned a few coppers by selling a dead mouse as meat for a cat, and with these as capital acquired such an enormous amount of wealth that the king raised him to the position of nobleman—(*Setthi*).[3]

The lords of a certain city wore garlands of red flowers. This custom was explained as due to the fact that the king had raised a man of the lowest rank to be the lord-protector of that city.[4]

Also, there is sufficient evidence to show that professions were not as a rule confined to families or special classes. For instance, Upali's parents in thinking of a profession for their son considered that to make

1. *Asadisa Jātaka*
2. *Guttila Jātaka*
3. *Chullaka-Setthi Jātaka*
4. *Chavaka Jātaka*
5. *Maha Vagga—Vinaya*

him a scribe would be to make his fingers sore, to make him an accountant would be to make his heart ache, and to make him a money-changer would be to spoil his eye-sight.[5]

In ancient India it appears that opportunities were given for people to follow whatever profession they liked. There were instances of some following more than one profession and of others changing from one profession to another. Jivaka was a famous surgeon and physician and was also a minister to King Ajāsatthu.

Individual freedom was heightened by the freedom of thought and of action proclaimed by the Buddha. . As for freedom of thought, the Buddha's words might be construed as the greatest charter of freedom given to mankind, when he said : " Do not believe anything because it is believed by parents, teachers, learned men, men of high rank or by the public, or because it is thought to be given by divine inspiration, or by an oracle, or because it is handed down by tradition, or because it is found in books, or because someone proclaims it to be true, but believe anything if it agrees with reason, investigation and experienced knowledge."[1]

Freedom of action was taught by the doctrine that each individual is responsible for his own actions, without any fear of punishment from gods. The natural consequence was to free the mind from priestcraft, to make the practice of religion a private and personal matter. The recognition of this fact created no religious discussions. Members of the same family belonged to various religious faiths. Followers of one teacher went to discuss with and learn from other teachers. Ministers of the King held different religious creeds, yet along with the rest of the king's subjects they were governed by the same laws and rights.

No man or woman was punished by the state for his or her religious views. Religion was no bar to hold office or perform public duties. Tolerance in religion was practised in Buddha's day and Buddha's philosophy emphasised the need of such tolerance.

Personal freedom was brought to its highest development during the days of the Buddha, thereby directly building up individual character and indirectly influencing national character and culture.

Emperor Asoka re-stated the Buddhist conception of tolerance in his rock edicts.

1. *Anguttara Nikaya* II XX. Prince Kālāma Sutta

Edict XII.

"King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the Gods, honours all sects, ascetics and householders and honours with gift and manifold honour . . . . For one who honours one's own sect and condemns another's sect, all through attachment to one's own sect—why ?—in order that one may illuminate one's own sect, in reality by so doing injures, more assuredly, one's own sect. Concourse is therefore commendable—why ?—in order that they may hear and desire to hear one another's *Dhamma*. For this is the desire of the Beloved of the Gods—what ?—that all sects shall be well-informed and conducive of good. And those who are favourably disposed towards this or that sect should be informed : "The Beloved of the Gods does not so much think of gift or honour as —what ?—As that there may be a growth of the essential among all sects and also mutual appreciation." . . . .

Edict XIII.

" . . . . And this edict of *Dhamma* has been engraved for this purpose—why ?—in order that whosoever may be, my sons and great-grandsons, may not think of a new conquest as worth achieving, that in regard to a conquest, possible only through (the use) of arrows, they may prefer forbearance and lightness of punishment, and that they may regard that to be the conquest which is a conquest through *Dhamma*. That is good for here and hereafter. May attachment to *Dhamma* develop into attachment to all kingdoms. That is (good) for here and hereafter."

WOMEN

THE CONDITION of women in a country is to a great extent an index to the social progress of the country. Enlightened society rebels against tyranny and bondage whether they are applicable to women or to any class of people. It is an admitted fact that intellectual and cultural development of women is essential to social progress.

The freedom enjoyed by the women of Buddhist India shows the advanced state of society at the time and that progress may be attributed to a certain extent to the work of women. The activities of Indian mothers then were not confined to their household duties and to the bringing up of children. They took an active part in the public affairs of the country. Their freedom and their public-spiritedness were the outcome of a liberal education.

The object of ancient female education seems to be cultural. In the *Therā-Gata* there are references to learned women. Mutta, a student was the child of an eminent Brahamin at Savatthi ; Punna, a student, was the daughter of a leading burgess of the same city, and Thissa, a student, was from the Sakyan race.

Rhetoric and elocution were practised then as an accomplishment Dhamma-dinnā was the foremost teacher among the sisters of the Buddhist order. Sukkā, who became well versed in the teachings of the Buddha, was a ready speaker. She became a famous preacher of the day. Nanduttarā, from the Kingdom of Kurus, was learned in arts and sciences. She was a renowned orator and toured about India debating. Bhaddā Kundalakesā went wherever there were learned teachers and carefully learnt the methods of their knowledge. She was a keen debater who challenged and defeated most of the well-known orators.

Extemporised versification was considered a mark of culture and learning. Traces of this custom still exist in India. On special occasions verse was used as the effective mode of giving expression to emotion or sentiment. The songs sung by women on the attainment of enlightenment are spontaneous expressions of joy.[1] At the dedica-

1. *Thera Gātha*

tion of Pubārāma, a well-known residence of the Buddha and his disciples, the rich lady Visākā sang a song of her own composition, expressing her joy.[1]

From the many instances which are casually mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures it is clear that education was not denied to women of ancient India. There were women who had specialised in certain branches of knowledge.

The chief method of most teachers was to pay individual attention to each pupil. Bhaddā Kundalakesā, in her thirst for learning, went wherever there was a teacher famous for his learning or wisdom. With famous teachers to teach her, she became well known as one of the most learned women of her day.

Sometimes the parents themselves attended to the education of their children.

" A man skilled in five-hundred theses married a woman skilled in five-hundred theses. Their son, Sachchaka and their four daughters were taught a thousand theses by the parents.[2]

Although learning at the feet of the teacher was a well-established custom in ancient India, yet other avenues of learning were not ignored. Men and women went to hear great teachers or philosophers addressing public meetings in parks or halls. They met renowned people whom they invited into their homes, where they were listened to by enthusiastic audiences after meals.

Talented and learned women went about the country as teachers. Without the general education of women it would not have been possible in Buddha's day and later to send out women missionaries from India to other parts of the world. Princess Sangamittā, the daughter of Emperor Asoka, left the shores of India as a missionary. She was "learned and well versed in Buddhist philosophy".[3] Even up to this day she is remembered with veneration and gratitude by the Buddhists of Ceylon.

With such varied and public activities women could not have been confined to purely domestic work, therefore the "purdah" system of caging women must be of later origin and growth. Nor is there any reference to such practices in the Buddhist scriptures.

Women in Buddhist India went into "homeless life" just as their husbands, bore great hardships,[4] and with determination and effort succeeded in attaining enlightenment.[5]

---

1. *Dhammapada Aṭṭakatha*
2. *Culla Kalinga Jātaka*
3. *Thupavansa* and *Mahavamsa*
4. *Vessantara Jātaka*
5. *Thera Gātha*

They did not hesitate to adapt themselves to adverse circumstances. When necessary they worked and earned their livelihood without any feeling of degradation. Uttamā, the daughter of a wealthy landowner became poor and began to work as a domestic servant.[1] A husband who wished to renounce family life in order to become a recluse said to his wife : " Wife, you will have to earn your living ".[2] The words of the husband suggest that it was customary for women to work for wages.

Women used to be employed as maids or nurses in rich families. Vaddhesi was a nurse to Mahā-Prajāpati. Other popular occupations for women were selling fruit and flowers, dancing, playing music, nursing, spinning, weaving cloth, dress-making, gathering firewood and various kinds of light work pertaining to agriculture.

The amusements and pastimes of the ladies differed according to their rank and means. Parks and pleasances used to be visited by royalty and the ladies of the court for recreation or water-sports.[3] A special day was observed as the ladies' day for water-sports when the river banks were crowded with women of all ranks.[4] The parks and pleasure gardens saw men and women in their best attire on public holidays.[5]

On certain festive occasions some women used to enjoy themselves by indulging in strong drinks. There is the record of some ladies under the influence of intoxicating liquor disturbing a meeting at Savatthi, by singing and dancing so as to disturb the speaker.[6] Music and dancing undoubtedly must have been popular amusements, for the Buddha had to warn his disciples not to indulge in dancing and singing for " men and women used to dance and sing and play music together, and they used to take and send garlands and nosegays to each other."[7]

It was not unusual for ladies to go for pleasure drives on elephants or in chariots. There is the instance of women not only driving their own chariots, but even racing with men. " Ambapali drove up against the young Lichchavi princes, pole to pole, yoke to yoke, wheel to wheel, axle to axle."[8]

The established forms of etiquette and propriety were generally observed among women. It was customary to send a bevy of young girls to greet a great person visiting a city ; so Visāka, the daughter of a rich nobleman was sent with a large number of other young girls in

1. *Thera Gāthā*
2. *Bandhanagara Jātaka*
3. *Mathanga Jātaka*
4. *Visaka—Dhammapadatta Katha*
5. *Puppharatta Jataka*
6. *Kumbha Jataka*
7. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga I
8. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI

order to welcome the Buddha to the city. Visāka, though she was only seven years old at the time, was selected for this as she was reputed to have courteous manners.[1]

The dignity of a lady did not permit her to trudge along the streets. A man in straightened circumstances once said to his wife : " It is not becoming for you to trudge along the streets with me. Wait here for a short time until I send for a carriage with a servant to bring you into the city in a proper manner".[2] It was considered ungraceful for a young lady to run. A party of young girls were going to the river when a sudden shower of rain came on. Visāka walked in the rain while her companions ran for shelter, for she knew that it was not dignified for a king, or a royal elephant or a lady to run. Paying visits at unusual hours or bathing without suitable costumes were deemed improper.[3] It was also a well-established custom for the lady of the house to serve her guests.[4]

Among other rights of women, the right to own and dispose of property was acknowledged. Visāka got a large storied residence built at great expense and presented it to the Buddha and his disciples.[5] Ambapāli was another who caused a similar gift of a residence to be built in the beautiful gardens attached to her house. She is also described as the owner of a number of magnificent chariots and horses.[6] Jivaka, the famous surgeon and physician was given 4,000 khavanus[7] by a rich lady for curing a chronic disease in her head. Her husband, son and daughter-in-law each gave him a gift of 4,000 khavanus.[8]

Life of women generally in all ages seems to be closely associated with vanity, personal decorations and adornments. The prosperity of a country often encouraged this feminine love of ornament and decoration. Enormous sums of money had been spent in ancient India on dress and jewellery. Women were described as " decked with jewels and garlands". They wore a robe or cloak when they travelled.[9] The cloak of a rich lady was described thus : " This garment was finished in four months. Its thread was made of silver. It extended from head to foot. Around the hem were decorations of gold and silver. On the top of the head, by the sides of the ears, at the neck, at the knees, at the elbows and at the sides of the waist there were gold ornaments. A part of the cloak consisted of a peacock and there were a hundred feathers of gold on

1. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakatha*
2. *Asampadana Jātaka*
3. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
4. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
5. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga VI
6. *Theri Gāthā*
7. An ancient gold coin
8. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
9. *Thera Gāthā*—Bhadda Kundala

each side. Its beak was made of coral, the eyes were gems, and so were the neck and tail-feathers. The ribs of the feathers were of silver, and so were parts of the legs. When it is placed in position on Visāka's head it appeared like a peacock dancing on the top of a hill, and the sound which came from the midribs was heard like heavenly music. This cloak was worth ninety millions and a hundred thousand were spent on making it"[1]

This was the type of cloak which noble ladies wore on ceremonial occasions. It was also used as a bride's dress. The head-dress seems to have been attached to the cloak as a part of it.

There is an instance where a servant girl of the rich nobleman, Anatha-pindika, asked her mistress for an ornament to wear on a festive occasion when she had to go with the other servants to the public park. The lady gave her an ornament worth a thousand "pieces" of gold.[2]

Of the numerous kinds of jewellery, the most commonly worn were bangles of ivory, silver and gold and jewelled bracelets,[3] ear-drops, strings of beads, girdles, necklaces and rings.[4] The precious stones and gems used for jewellery consisted of beryl, crystal, agate, coral, pearl, diamond, cats-eye, ruby, chank and cornelian. Also ladies carried about with them fans made with beautiful feathers and ornamented with gems and precious stones.

Silks and Benares muslin, both blue and white, were valued as materials for dresses. The bright colour of fine muslin is compared to the purity of a precious stone by ancient writers when they said : "A gem on Benares muslin, where both being pure, neither defiles the other."[5]

There were also different kinds of woollen and cotton cloths. It was then a custom to perfume silk or other garments with perfumes and incense.[6]

Ladies' footwear varied in shape and design and was more elaborate than that of the men. The different kinds then in use can be judged from those prohibited to disciples of the Buddha. "Neither doubly lined, nor trebly nor many lined shoes are to be worn. Slippers of a blue, yellow, red, brown, black, orange or yellowish colour should be avoided. Also shoes with edges with those colours, or with heel coverings, are prohibited. Other prohibited kinds consist of moccasins,

1. *Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakata*—Visaka
2. *Sulasa-Sutta*
3. *Kasave Jātaka* and *Kumba Karaba Jātaka*
4. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga V
5. *Arcchariya Abbhuta Dhamma Sutta*
6. *Mayhaka-Jātaka*

laced boots, boots lined with cotton, or those made like the wings of partridges, pointed with rams' or goats' horns, or ornamented with scorpions' tails or sewn round with peacocks' feathers, or shoes adorned with different kinds of skins, or ornamented with gold, silver, pearls, beryls, crystals, copper, glass, tin, lead or bronze.[1]

The use of perfumes, scents and sweet-scented oils was common among women and men.[2] The demand for garlands and flowers must have been great in cities. The nobles and kings had their special garland-makers. Garland-making had been a remunerative art.[3]

Hair-dressers used to be employed by both men and women. A barber at Vesali was described as "a man who used to do shaving, hair-dressing and cross-plaiting for the royal households of kings, queens, princes and princesses."[4]

Each age has its own conception, not only of fashions in dress and ornament, but also of typical beauty. It will be interesting to note the accepted conception of beauty according to the writers in Buddhist India. "The perfect beauty is graceful in figure, beautiful in face, charming in manner, of the most fine complexion, neither very tall nor very short, neither very stout nor very slim, and neither very dark nor very fair."[5]

Also the five characteristic features of beauty in women were known to be the beauty of hair, of flesh, of bone, of skin and of youth. To possess beautiful hair was to have hair like the peacock's tail in grace, and when loosened the locks should reach the lady's ankles with the ends of the hair curled up. Smooth lips of bright colour signified the beauty of flesh. White teeth with even interstices resembling a row of pearls was the beauty of bone. The beauty of skin was the skin naturally glossy like the blue lotus flower. The possessor of the beauty of youth was lively and fresh in youthfulness in spite of age.[6]

The Buddhist scriptures describe the well-known beauties of those days as the possessors of the five characteristic features of feminine beauty.

The fame of the women of those ancient days was not confined to such feminine charms alone. They were not barred from attaining to the highest mental culture and enlightenment. The conditions favourable to the progress of women as existing then were justified by

1. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga V
2. *Saukka Jātaka*
3. *Kusa Jātaka*
4. *Sigāla Jātaka*
5. *Maha Sudassana Sutta*
6. (*Pancha Kalyāna*) *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā

the achievements of women in the different spheres of life. The long list of examples given in *Theri Gatha* is but a small number of women who had attained to that high state of mental culture which demands unusual effort in concentration and strength of character.

The lives of remarkable women of Buddhist India deserve special study and attention. There was Queen Pajapathi Gothami, who renounced the pleasures of the royal court and became the leader of women who sought perfection and enlightenment. She was a renowned preacher of the doctrine. She had attained enlightenment or the highest mental culture in the practice of Buddhism.[1] Her example was followed by Princess Yasodharā who was noted for her devotion and love to her husband who became the Buddha. She was well known as one who had attained to the highest psychic powers.[1] Dhamma-dinnā was the foremost of the Buddha's lady disciples who could preach. She was known as a deep thinker and philosopher who was able to teach her husband to develop his mind.[1]

Nanduttarā, the orator and debater, was "learned in arts and sciences". She toured in India carrying "the rose-apple branch of victory". She was invincible in argument and debate until she met Maha Moggallāna, who defeated her, thereby showing the new mode of life taught by the Buddha. Bhadda Kundalakesā was another debater and dialectitian reputed for her great learning.[1] Presenting a person with a rose-apple branch was analogous to the granting of a laurel wreath among the Greeks and the Romans. The rose-apple branch was given to a champion orator, who carried it with him and stuck it in the market place as a challenge to a debate.

Sihā, the sister of a great warrior, was reputed for her strong will and determination. She was known to have practised her meditation with such determined effort that she kept herself awake by tying a rope round her neck to prevent her from nodding.[1]

Addhakāsi, Vimalā and Ambapāli were well known actresses of the day, who being converted to the mode of Buddhist life, attained to perfection and enlightenment. Among others who developed their minds and were enlightened were domestic servants, daughters of kings, nobles, brahamins, merchants, goldsmiths and others of humbler rank. Bandula Mallika, the wife of a commander-in-chief showed her self-control in looking after her guests at a feast without showing any signs of emotion, although she had heard the news of the death of her husband and sons.[2]

---

1. *Theri Gāthī* 2. *Bhadda-sāla Sutta*

Another Mallika, the daughter of a garland-maker was exalted to the position of the Queen to King Kosala.[1] Queen Mallika, and Visaka were very popular figures in Indian society in the Kingdom of Kosala. Lady Visāka, the daughter of one of the richest noblemen, was well-known for her kindness and generosity She was the friend of the poor, and one of the most public-spirited ladies of that time. The Buddha once described her as "learned, able and sensible."[2]

The spirit of service to the poor and ignorant was the outcome of Buddhist culture in India. Even during the lifetime of the Buddha lady Buddhist teachers travelled about the country teaching the new mode of life as taught by the Buddha. The spirit was kept up even to a later date. Princess Sangamittā, the daughter of Emperor Asoka, left her native land and the pleasures of a royal palace to spend her life as a missionary to serve the cause of humanity.

---

1. *Kummasapinda Sutta*

2. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII

MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE AS a social institution evolves from the customs of a country. Conceptions of marriage vary with the progress of society. Marriage customs, while revealing the past history of a race, indicate the nature of its family life.

During the days of the Buddha, marriage was a social contract with obligations recognised by law. There were no religious rites performed by priests. The marriage ceremony took place in the presence of relations and friends who became witnesses to the marriage. The publicity given to the ceremony was the acknowledgment of the marriage by the parties to it.

In Buddhist and pre-Buddhist India, monogamy was the established system of marriage. The western commentators on Buddhist scriptures have fallen into the common error about Buddhist marriage when they try to represent marriage in Buddhist India as polygamous. They have misunderstood the Pali words for "girl", "maid", "woman", "house-keeper", "queen", as meaning wife. The result is that they give in some instances five hundred, or even sixteen thousand, wives to a king. In Pali scriptures "mehesika" is the word used for the wife of a king, for she is the head of the household women, and "bhojini" is a woman attendant or a lady of the court.

Apart from etymological meanings of words, examination into the mode of life affords sufficient evidence to come to a definite conclusion about the form of marriage that existed in Buddhist India.

In the "birth stories"[1] of the Buddha, the striver after Buddhahood is represented as going through life after life with Princess Yasodarā as his wife, thereby illustrating the continuation of a love by an ideal couple until the attainment of Nibbāna. Following this example it is the pious wish of married couples in Buddhist countries, even up to this day, to be wife and husband birth after birth, until the attainment of Nibbāna.

According to the teachings of the Buddha, complete chastity is the principle in life for those who renounce the household life in order to attain enlightenment. The practice of strict monogamy was believed to produce special super-normal powers in men and women.[2] One of the five precepts to be observed by a lay Buddhist was to abstain from

1. Jatakas

2. *Powers of Pathivath Dhamma*

sensual depravity. Committing adultery is a means of violating this precept. The early commentators on this precept speak of a "lawful wife" and not "wives". In Sigalōvāda Sutta, which is considered to be the moral code for the laity, the Buddha, speaking of the duties of wife and husband, pointed out that it was one of the duties of a husband and wife to be faithful to each other. In another sermon, the Buddha taught that it was a blessing to be able to support one's children and wife.[1]

In enumerating things that degrade man, the following are mentioned as examples :—" To be given to women, drink and gambling, and not being satisfied with *one's own wife*, to seek harlots and the wives of others".[2] Then there are several cases where a man had renounced his family life, his wife (and not his wives) tried to win him back. In the Jatakas there are instances where married couples who had no children used to make prayers and vows to Gods, but there is no mention of a man marrying a second wife for the sake of issue while the first wife was alive.

The following passage from Maha-Paduma Jataka will show that it was not customary to marry another while the first wife was living. "Once upon a time when Brahmadatta was King of Benares, the Bodhisatta was born as the son of his queen. Because his face had the splendour of a lotus flower he was named Paduma-Kumara. When he grew, he was educated in all the arts and accomplishments. Then his mother died. The king took another consort and appointed his son viceroy."

In addition to the internal evidence of the scriptures, the countries into which Buddhism was introduced adopted the monogamous form of marriage. In Ceylon, monogamy was the form of marriage under Buddhist influence. The idea of a harem was unknown in Ceylon. In other Buddhist countries also the same influence on marriage can be detected.

Polygamy can exist only in communities where the women are kept in bondage. With the development of their conditions they begin to assert their rights. Even today polygamy exists as a recognised social institution only among races in which women's characters are depraved for want of education or culture.

In Buddhist India the freedom enjoyed by women, coupled with their progress, could not have possibly given room for polygamy as the

1. *Mahā-Maṅgala Sutta* 2. *Parābhava Sutta*

recognised form of marriage. The Buddhist scriptures abound in instances which show the independent spirit of women. Pabāvathi, the Queen of Kusa, went back with her retinue to her parents when she did not like to live with her ugly-faced husband.[1] Visāka, the daughter of a rich nobleman, was prepared to go back to her parents when her father-in-law tried to impose his views of religion on her. Ultimately he gave in to his daughter-in-law.[2]

According to the evidence of Buddhist scriptures, there had been cases of both exodamous and indogamous marriages. It was not uncommon for a citizen of one kingdom to marry that of another. Although the general principle seems to have been union between those of equal rank or of the same class, yet there were no social barriers to marriages between people of different classes. For instance, King Kosola married a flower-girl without any disapproval from his people, and there were marriages between the Kastriyas, the Brahamins and the Vaishyas.

The minimum age for marriage was sixteen. Child-marriages were unknown to Buddhist and pre-Buddhist India. The consent of the parents was taken as a duty which the parties to marriage owed to their parents, yet the absence of such consent had no legal effect to dissolve marriage. Before the parents gave their consent they satisfied themselves as to the young man's character and ability. A father said, commenting on a marriage proposal to his daughter, " I will test the virtue of these youths and will give her in marriage to him that most excels in virtue."[3]

In the moral code for the laity, gambling was disapproved of, and the gambler was described as " one not sought after by those who give or take in marriage."[4]

A young man had to show that he was proficient in the arts and learning which are expected from his social status. Prince Siddhartha, the son of King Suddhōdhana, had to display his skill in princely arts before obtaining the consent of Princess Yasodhara's parents. The bride was also expected to possess certain accomplishments. The parents of Eraka, the son of a prominent citizen of Sāvatthi, wedded him to "a maiden noted for her beauty, virtue, years and accomplishments."[5]

1. *Kusa Jātaka*
2. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākhā
3. *Silavimamsana Jātaka*
4. *Sigālovāda Sutta*
5. *Thera Gāthā*

Depending on the importance of their consent, the parents often arranged the marriages for their dutiful and obedient children. There are also instances of young men who arranged their own marriages when they met young women and fell in love with them. King Kosala's meeting of Malika, the flower-seller, in a pleasure-garden is well-known in Buddhist history.

It was a conversation between Mahaausadha and Amarā that led them to admire each other.[1] A young nobleman of Savatthi was induced by his lady-love to make friends with the prominent people of the city.[2]

The marriage proposal came as a rule from the bridegroom or his parents either by communicating the matter directly to the bride or her parents. A girl was not forced into marriage against her wish. When girls did not like to be married they became bhikkuṇis, thereby taking the vows of celibacy, even against the wishes of their parents.[3]

The proposed marriage used to be announced by garlanding the future bride in a ceremonious manner. "It is not proper for maidens to return home on foot when decorated with a betrothal wreath or garland. The daughters of influential families return home in chariots. Others either go by ordinary carriages, or walk under a palm-leaf parasol, or if that is lacking they cover their shoulders with a garment."[4]

The marrige ceremony, which was not religious, consisted of certain customary rites. The bride wore a special dress on the occasion. The wedding dress of Visākā, a rich nobleman's daughter, was worth ninety millions. The ceremony consisted in making the bride stand on a heap of gems and jewels, and in annointing her,[5] and pouring water on the clasped hands of the couple in the presence of friends and relations. Pouring water was the ancient, formal symbolical procedure used in parting with the possession of anything. It was customary to invite friends to attend the ceremony. Such guests used to spend weeks or even months in feasting and merriment at the residence of the bride before the marriage ceremony took place. If the private house was not large enough temporary pavilions or halls used to be built for the purpose. Sometimes public halls were used. Prince Nanda's wedding was to be celebrated at the coronation hall at Kapilavāsthu.[6]

1. *Ummagga Jātaka*
2. *Maha Ukkusa Jātaka*
3. *Theri Gāthā*—Sumēdhā
4. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākhā
5. *Kummāsapiṇḍa-Jātaka*
6. *Thera Gāthā*—Nanda

In most matters of significance, including marriages, importance was attached to the auspicious moment for the ceremony, for which the astrologer's aid was sought.[1] That faith in astrology was disapproved by the Buddha.

The married couple became the recipients of many presents on the occasion of the marriage. The wealthy parents used to give their daughters property which was called "the perfume-money". King Kōsala gave a district to King Bimbisāra as the "perfume-money" of his daughter at her marriage. It was this custom which evidently degenerated into the present dowry system. The presents received by Visāka at her marriage were distributed by her among the poor folk of the city of Sāvasti.

There are other references to wedding presents. "Mitta-Gandhaka made friendship with the four gate-keepers, town-wardens, astrologers, nobles of the court, commander-in-chief, viceroy and the king. The king downwards sent him gifts. Mitta also received presents sent by the king, viceroy, etc."[2]

Taking the bride in procession to the bridegroom's residence was an event of great mirth and splendour. The music, the songs of joy, the dancers and the line of elephants and carriages and the streets crowded with spectators made the occasion sensational.

The dissolution of the marriage depended upon the consent of the parties to it. There were no obstacles preventing a man or woman marrying again if the marriage was dissolved or if one of the spouses was dead. Burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands or restrictions on widows who wished to marry again were not heard of in Buddhist India.

A Chinese traveller, writing about marriages in Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki (the Buddhist Records of the Western World, Bk. II) said : "When they marry they rise or fall in position according to their new relationship. They do not allow promiscuous marriages between relations. A woman once married can never take another husband. Besides these, there are other classes of many kinds that inter-marry according to their several callings."

1. *Nakkatta-Jātaka*

2. *Mahā Ukkusa Jātaka*

CHAPTER SIX

SOCIAL ORDERS

WITH THE growth of a community its members begin to group themselves into classes or social orders. This takes place imperceptibly in the beginning. The process is slow. It is voluntary when people attach themselves to certain trades or occupations and form themselves into groups. It is a selective process when people chosen for special work become a class by themselves.

With the efflux of time the class distinctions in a community become prominent and when the distinctions begin to be observed with rigidity tendencies to claim special rights and privileges become noticeable. When religion recognises the superiority or the inferiority of a class the evil is done and the class system turns into a caste system.

In the days of the Buddha, most Indian kingdoms possessed four classes of people. The royalty and the nobility formed the order known as Kshatrya. Kings, governors, viceroys and commanders of armies were generally chosen from this class. The Brahamins have become the class that was engaged in pursuit of knowledge. They were reputed to be the intellectual class, so most of them followed the learned professions. The merchant class was known as Vaishya, and the fourth class of Sudras consisted of manual labourers. The four social orders, therefore, were those of the rulers, of the learned, of the merchants and of the labourers.

In some other countries at that time there were only two social orders. "In Yona, Kamboja, and other adjacent countries there were only two classes—the masters and the servants. There masters could become servants and the servants could become masters."[1]

Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki (the Buddhist records of the Western world) speaks of the four classes as mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures : "With respect to the division of families, there are four classifications. The first is called the Brahman, men of pure conduct. They guard themselves in religion, live purely and observe the most correct principles. The second is called the Kshattriya, the royal caste. For ages they have been the governing class ; they apply themselves to

1. *Assalayana-Sutta*

virtue and kindness. The third is called the Vaisyas, the merchant class. The fourth is called the Sudra, the agricultural class; they labour in ploughing and tillage." Bk. II.

Megesthenes' classification was according to the occupation of the people. "The whole population of India is divided into seven castes of which the first is formed by the collective body of the Philosophers, which in point of number is inferior to the other classes, but in point of dignity pre-eminent over all.

"The second caste consists of the husbandmen who appear to be far more numerous than the others. Being, moreover, exempted from fighting and other public services they devote the whole of their time to tillage.

"The third caste consists of the neatherds and shepherds. The fourth, artisans, and the fifth military. The sixth consists of the overseers and seventh councillors and assessors."—Fragment I. Strabo.

In early Indian society the classes were based on occupations, while there was no rigid social influence to prevent a person of one class doing the work of another class, for "one of the labour class could have as a servant a noble or a Brahamin."[1]

A king once worked as a garland-maker, a cook and a menial servant without being disgraced for doing so.[2] There were instances of Brahamins who had been merchants and manual labourers. Also deserving persons had been raised to positions of high honour, irrespective of the class to which they belonged. Jivaka, the son of an actress, became the royal physician and was subsequently made the prime-minister to the king.[3] A man from the labouring class was raised to be the lord protector of the city.[4] In certain kingdoms when the king died without an heir, the method of selecting the sovereign from the common people shows that there had been no class barriers, even in the choice of a person for the throne.

When the Buddha appeared in India, there was a strong feeling of class-consciousness, for in the Kingdom of Madhura the Brahamins had asked for special privileges. The king went to Mahā Kaccāna, a disciple of the Buddha, and inquired of him about the Brahamin claims to superiority. The king, being questioned by the sage, confessed that a person of one class could employ one of another as servant. Also the king admitted that law was no respecter of any class, for he said :

---

1. *Madura Sutta*
2. *Kusa Jātaka*
3. *Thera Gāthā* & *Samanapāla Sutta*
4. *Chavaka Jātaka*

" If a noble is a burglar, thief, house-breaker, robber or adulterer and if my people catch him and bring him before me, I should put him to death, or confiscate his goods, or banish him, or otherwise deal with him as circumstances required, for the noble is now turned into a malefactor. The same principle applies to other classes."[1]

Then the king admitted that he would salute, honour and defend a person who has renounced temporal life to become enlightened, irrespective of the class to which such a person belonged before renouncing the life of a householder.[2]

The Buddha saw the weakness of the claims of superiority of the Brahamins as a class, and pointed out that a true intellectual or cultured person should be " one who has removed from himself all unrighteousness, who is free from pride and impurity, who is self-restrained, who is accomplished in knowledge, and who has fulfilled the duties of holiness. Such a person may justly call himself a Brahamin."[3]

The Buddha, with his characteristic humour, taught that the Brahamins of his day who called themselves the intellectual, the cultured and the wise were not so ; but the name could be applied to those who had acquired those qualities by their own effort such as his followers. The Buddha gave a special meaning to the term ' Brahamin '. " I do not call him a Brahamin who is merely the off-spring of a Brahamin mother. Neither through matted hair, nor through clan, nor through birth is one a Brahamin. In whom are truth and right and purity—he, he is the Brahamin.

" Whosoever has severed all bonds, who trembles no more, who is done with all ties—him I call Brahamin.

" Who has ceased from all hurt to any living being, who neither slays nor causes to slay—him do I call Brahamin.

" Friendly among the hostile, tranquil among the turbulent, amid the grasping, ungrasping—such a person I call Brahamin.

" From whom lust and hatred and pride and envy have fallen away like the mustard seed from the point of the awl—him I call Brahamin.

" Whose even voice gives utterance to words kindly, instructive, and true, words that give pain to none whatsoever—him do I call Brahamin.

" Whosoever takes naught that is not given, be it small or great, be it good or bad, be it big or little, him I call Brahamin.

1. *Madura Sutta*
2. *Madura Sutta* *and Samañña Phala Sutta*
3. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga, Ch. I

"Wise with deep wisdom, well knowing the 'right way' and 'wrong way', attained to the 'Supreme object', such a person do I call Brahamin.

"In whom is found no desire, through perfect knowledge ceased from all doubts, attained to the seat of deathless Nibbāna—him do I call Brahamin."[1]

By such teaching the Buddha and his disciples removed the prevailing notion of class superiority as a birthright. Into a new order established by the Buddha, were admitted men and women from all classes. There were kings and queens, princes and princesses, nobles, Brahamins, merchants, actors and actresses, courtesans, scavengers, farmers, carpenters, servants and others. This cosmopolitan group that gathered round the Buddha were honoured by the rich and the poor for the purity of their lives and for the service they rendered in teaching the people. They created the public opinion that people are not high or low according to their wealth, parentage or rank, but according to their deeds.[2] People were made to realise that it was one's deeds that made a person noble or ignoble.[3] People began to honour one another for the nobility of their character and the purity of their lives. This brought about a revolution in the moral standard of the people and led them to respect each other and be respected by others. This had a unifying effect on society. India, thus united by Buddhist culture, enabled Emperor Asoka to build his great empire based on righteousness.

As the immediate result of the new culture, wherever the Buddhists went they were honoured. Other nations welcomed Buddhist teachers from India. With the fall of Dharma-Asoka's Buddhist Empire and the rise of Brahamin influence and priestcraft, the noble character and honour introduced by Buddhist culture began to wane. In place of the class system which was broken down by Buddhist influence, the Brahamin priests introduced the caste system which has ever since divided India and made moral imbeciles of most of her children.

Religion and nationalism, while trying to unite their adherents, have excluded and alienated others from them. Buddhism was free from both these influences. There was no god taught in Buddhism, hence there was no narrowness of the theistic mind in it. The Buddha, discarding ritual, emphasised the importance of human actions and their reactions. So the people were directed to pay attention to their

1. *Dhammapada*
2. *Cūla-Kamma vibhanga-Sutta*
3. *Vasala-Sutta*

thoughts, words and deeds. As to nationalism also, the Buddha gave a wider interpretation. During his time some Indians used to call themselves Aryans, and the rest not being cultured were the non-Aryans. This was similar to the Roman conception of the *barbari*. Buddha conceived the word " Aryan " as above geographical, racial or political limitations. He interpreted the word as " cultured or enlightened " and called his followers irrespective of race or class, the " Arya-putta ", the cultured or enlightened sons. Also, the mode of life for perfection and enlightenment as taught by him was called " the eight-featured method of the cultured or the enlightened."[1]

When that view was current in India, to become an Aryan was not to be born of particular parents, but to acquire the qualities of the " cultured and the enlightened " ones.

1. *Ariyō-Aṭṭhaṅgiko-Maggo*

MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS

THE NATURE of ceremonies and amusements at social gatherings gives an insight into the cultural progress of a community. At such assemblies not only the group psychology, but the individual mentality can be studied. As in every progressive society, in ancient India people gathered together for religious, political and social purposes. Such gatherings multiply and their activities and procedure become refined with the progress of the community.

In all communities at births, marriages and deaths people gather together. On such occasions customary ceremonies are observed. In the days of the Buddha it was a current practice to predict the future of the child by observing its features and the marks of its body. When Prince Sidhartha was born, seven "wise men" were consulted. Six of them were of opinion that the baby would grow up to be either a world emperor[1] or the Buddha. The seventh had no doubt that he would be the Buddha.

The future of a new-born baby was also predicted by consulting the stars.[2] The birth of a child used to be celebrated by inviting the holy men or a venerable teacher for a banquet, and from these the child received blessings.

A child received its name on a special day amidst feasting and rejoicing of friends and relations who brought presents for the child. The name was often selected by consulting a respected elder member of the family. On the day of naming a certain prince "the king sent a message to the child's grand-mother asking for a name for the child."[3]

Some children were named after their relations. Visākā's son received his grand-father's name, Migāra. Some names were associated with memorable events that occurred at the time. A child was named Maha-ausadha (the great remedy) for at its birth its grand-father was cured of his chronic headache. When the father of a Sākyan prince was informed that a son was born to bring joy, the father named him Ānanda (joy).

1. *Chakka-Vatthi*
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Angulimāla
3. *Bhadda Jātaka*

At the weddings of the rich, the guests used to be entertained with feasting for weeks or months. Music, dancing and singing were the principal methods of entertainment. Special halls and pavilions were built and decorated for the occasion.

Different in temperament were those who gathered to pay the last respects to a dying or a dead man. At the death bed of a person his friends would visit him. Before the passing away of the Buddha, "Mallas of Kusinārā were presented in groups. Each family in a group was presented saying : 'Lord, A Malla—so and so by name—with his children, his wife, retinue and friends, humbly bows down at the feet of the Buddha'."[1] Also the Mallas of Kusinārā thought that they should not give room for self-reproach in thinking that "in our own kingdom did the death of the Buddha take place, we did not take the opportunity of visiting the Buddha in his last hours."[2]

The custom of honouring the dead with flowers, wreaths and perfumes existed at the time of the Buddha. The mourners sometimes gave expression to their grief by composing verses in praise of the deceased which were sung at the cremation. This was done at the passing away of the Buddha by Anuruddha and Ānanda.

The following passage which describes the rites observed at the passing away of the Buddha illustrates the prevalent customs at cremations. "The Mallas of Kusinārā ordered their attendants, saying, 'Gather together perfumes and garlands and all the musical instruments in Kusinārā'. The Mallas took perfumes and garlands and musical instruments, and many garments and went to the *Sāla* grove, where the body of the Buddha lay. They passed six days in paying honour, reverence, respect and homage, with dancing, hymns, music, garlands, perfumes and in making canopies of garments and preparing ornamental wreaths to hand thereon . . . . Flowers were strewn knee-deep."[3]

In the funeral of kings and distinguished men, the corpse was wrapt in new cloth, then in carded wool, and again in new cloth in many such layers. Then after placing it in an oil vessel it was cremated on a pyre with all kinds of perfumes. Before the cremation people went thrice round the pyre in reverence. Then the ashes were sprinkled over with scented water. A memorial was erected in a public place enshrining the ashes, after which a feast was held in honour of the dead.[4]

1. *Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta*
2. *Ibid*
3. *Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta*
4. *Ibid*

Feasts and banquets were very popular. Private banquets were given in honour of great men and teachers. The distinguished guest often attended the banquet with his retinue, disciples or friends. There were forms of invitation. A prince who wished to invite the Buddha and his disciples thus ordered his chief attendant: "Go to the Lord, and in my name bow your head at his feet. Ask after his health, and invite him to be so good as to take his meal with me tomorrow, and to bring the members of his order with him".[1] The Buddha by silence accepted the invitation.

At private banquets the guests washed their feet before entering the hall. The host and hostess served the guests. It was considered a mark of negligence to allow the servants to attend on honoured guests. The banquet over, a learned discussion or a talk on some topical subject, or even a sermon, ensued. It was not uncommon to give presents to guests before parting.

Banqueting and feasting also took place after the completion of a newly built residence, for "when a house was built men held in high veneration were invited into it first."[2]

Special days for merry-making and feasting were observed as public holidays. Some of those festivals lasted only for a day, while there were others which went on for seven days.[3] On extraordinary occasions, public holidays were announced by proclamation. A public festival was held in honour of the coming of the Buddha to Rājagaha. Mallas of Kusinārā also, in order to celebrate the arrival of the Buddha to their country proclaimed, "that whosoever did not go forth to welcome the Buddha should pay a fine."

Many kinds of annual festivals were observed as public holidays. There were the "days of auspices" when people performed certain astrological rites.[5] At the festival of water-sports, the women in their best attire went to bathe in the rivers or tanks.[6] At the festival of elephants "a hundred elephants were set in array, with golden trappings and golden flags. All the palace court-yard was decorated."[7]

One festival was known as 'the drinking festival'. At a drinking festival, which was proclaimed at Sāvatthi, many women after providing strong drink for their husbands, at the end of the festival thought that they, too, would keep the feast.[8]

1. *Bodhi-Rāja Kumāra Sutta*
2. *Ibid*
3. *Ummagga Jātaka*
4. *Vinaya*—Sixth Kandaka
5. *Theri Gāthā*—Siyatta
6. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākhā
7. *Susima-Jātaka*
8. *Kumbha-Jātaka*

At certain festivals the significance or the meaning of the observances cannot easily be traced. There was a feast[1] where cows were yoked to vehicles with a bull between them.[2] At a feast held in the village of Pilidagama the children celebrating it wore ornamental dresses and garlands.[3] Some of these merry-makings took place at night. In Benares a festival known as the night festival of Kattika was held. The city was decorated and all the people kept holiday. They put on their best attire on the occasion.[4] At these various festivities there was dancing, singing and reciting[5] and even dramatic performances.[6]

Just as on festive days, large crowds assembled together in pleasure-gardens and parks of the cities, when people listened to orations, debates, sermons, musical contests, or witnessed wrestling and sports. It was a popular intellectual entertainment to listen to an address by an able speaker or to a debate between two well-known sages. "Five hundred Lichavis were in their assembly hall, met on some business, when they were invited to the debate which Sachchaka was to have with the Buddha".[7] A brilliant speech on such an occasion was termed a 'lion roar' and the speaker a "lion roarer."[8]

The procedure at public meetings of those days deserves attention. The speaker, being seated, addressed his audience. He also acted as the chairman of the meeting. The people, as they assembled, took their seats by greeting the speaker and president. A meeting is thus described in the scriptures: "The king, having approached and respectfully saluted the Buddha, sat down near him. Of the rest, some respectfully saluted him and sat down near him. Some exchanged greetings and pleasant words with him and sat down near him. Some bent their clasped hands towards him and sat down near him. Some shouted their name and family name and sat down near him. Some silently sat down near him."[9]

The speaker did not begin until one of the audience invited him to speak. Clapping of hands and shouts of joy were the usual forms of applause at the end of the speech. The title of a sermon or speech used to be given by the speaker himself at the conclusion of his speech. Some of the audience expressed their appreciation with words of praise addressed to the speaker. If the speaker were a teacher of a doctrine

1. The feast of *Ganga-mahi-Kilikaya*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga V
3. *Ibid*
4. *Pupp-hera Jātaka*
5. *Thera-Gāthā*—Vajji-Putta
6. *Thera-Gāthā*—Tālaputa
7. *Chūla-Sachchaka-Sutta*
8. *Thera-Gāthī*—Pindola Bharadvaja
9. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga

explaining the right mode of life, the convinced hearers declared themselves his followers.

The following passage from *Brahma-Jāla Sutta* illustrates this :

" When he had thus spoken, the Venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One : ' Strange, Lord, is this and wonderful ! And what name has this exposition of the truth ?' ' Ānanda, you may remember this exposition as the Net of Advantage, and as the Net of Truth, and as the Supreme Net, and as the Net of Theories ; remember it even as the Glorious Victory in the day of battle !' "[1]

" And when they had thus spoken, Ajāta-Sattu, the King, said to the Blessed One : ' Most excellent, Lord, most excellent ! Just as if a man were to set up that which has been thrown down, or were to reveal that which is hidden away, or were to point out the right road to him who has gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness so that those who have eyes could see external forms, just even so, Lord, has the truth been made known to me, in many a figure, by the Blessed One. And now I betake myself, Lord, to the Blessed One as my refuge, to the Truth, and to the Order, May the Blessed One accept me as a disciple, as one who, from this day forth, as long as life endures, has taken his refuge in them '."[2]

Megesthenes gives an interesting reference to meetings in India :

" The philosophers have their bode in a grove in front of the city within a moderate-sized enclosure. They live in a simple style, and lie on beds of rushes, or skins. They abstain from animal food and sexual pleasures, and spend their time in listening to serious discourse, and in imparting knowledge to such as will listen to them. The hearer is not allowed to speak, or even to cough, and much less to spit, and if he offends in any of these ways he is cast out from their society that very day, as being a man who is wanting in self-restraint."[3]

There were public and private gatherings to perform sacrifices to the gods, just as in ancient Rome. Before the custom disappeared through Buddhist influence, the Brahamin priests used to declare : " Let there be slain for sacrifice, so many bulls, so many steers, heifers, goats and rams. Let there be felled so many trees for sacrificial posts. Let so much " kusa " grass be cut to strew round the sacrificial spot."[4]

1. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
2. *Samañña Phala Sutta*
3. *Strabo* xv I 58-60
4. *Kandaraka Sutta*

Various subjects for conversation used to be taken up at social gatherings. Low and vulgar conversations from which the disciples of the Buddha were asked to refrain from were : Tales of kings, of robbers, of ministers of State ; tales of war, of terror, of battles, talk about food and drink, clothes, beds, garlands, perfumes ; talk about equipages, villages, towns, cities, nations ; stories about women and heroes gossip at market places and at tanks and wells ; ghost stories, boastful talk ; speculations about the creation of the world or about existence and non-existence. The above evidently comprised the list of frivolous talk among the common folk.

HOMES

ATTEMPTS TO get an accurate conception of an Indian home of 2,500 years ago would necessarily be met with difficulties. Descriptive references in scriptures and other writings can give us only a part of the picture. How far these parts will enable a reader to form the whole picture is a matter to be left to the individual imagination. Archaeological discoveries of the ruins of ancient buildings will no doubt be helpful in this respect.

According to Buddhist scriptures, stone, bricks and wood were used for buildings. There are constant references to seven-storeyed buildings. A hall was named "Brick Hall" because bricks were used for its construction.[1] In houses of several storeys the pillars were carved out of stone.[2] The roofing in common use was brick, stone, cement, straw and leaves.[2] Also plastered roofs and walls were not uncommon.[3] The doors, with their decorated door-posts and lintels,[4] and the windows with railings, network, curtains and shutters,[5] enhanced the external appearance of those ancient mansions. Some houses were decorated with lattice-work.[6] The basements of the houses were surrounded with fencing of brick, stone or wood.[7] Here are a few descriptions of the exterior parts of houses :

"Now this house enclosed by a wall in colour like vermilion, furnished with gates and tower was a beautiful and charming place."[8] This was a minister's house.

A nobleman's mansion in Sāvatthi was seven storeys high and had seven portals.[9] Also the residence of a councillor in the country of the Kurus had seven gateways.[10]

From the poetic description of the Palace of Righteousness an idea of a royal palace can be deduced :

"The Palace of Righteousness is surrounded with a double railing with cross-bars and figureheads of silver. It was built of bricks of four kinds. There are 84,000 pillars with fixed seats, twenty-four

1. *Mahā Pari Nibbāna Sutta*
2. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga VI
3. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
4. *Ibid*
5. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga VI
6. *Theri-Gāthā*
7. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
8. *Ummadanti Jātaka*
9. *Khadirangara Jātaka*
10. *Thera-Gāthā*—Raṭṭhapāla

staircases with balustrades with cross-bars and figureheads. The number of chambers is 84,000. At the door of every chamber is a palm tree, and a grove of palm trees stood at every entrance. The palace was hung round with a network of silver bells. The divans are made of gold, silver, ivory and sandalwood. They are spread with long-haired rugs, cloths embroidered with flowers and antelope skins. Each divan had lofty canopies and purple cushions."[1]

Attached to each palatial building or mansion were parks or pleasure-gardens, and at the several entrances to the houses of distinguished or wealthy people there were towers and ornamental gates with gate-keepers to guard them.[2] The grandeur of some gate-towers may be judged from the following passage :

"On seeing the gate-towers of Jētavana which Prince Jēta had built at a cost of ninety millions, one asked whether that was the place where the Gōtama lived. They said : 'It is only the gateway to it'."[3]

Some houses had a portico over the outer door.[4] The balconies of some buildings afforded a good view of the streets or country around. From such balconies the inmates greeted the distinguished people that passed by with "showers of flowers".[5]

Before entering a house it was customary to wash one's feet, so there stood outside the threshold of the house a vessel of water and a stool with a mat and cloth for wiping the feet.[6] On entering, one found the floors inlaid with brick, stone or wood,[7] and generally covered with rugs and mats of silk, wool or skin.[8] Rich mansions had their staircases decorated with jewelled slabs.[9] The stairs of the houses were generally made of brick, stone or wood.[10]

The complexity of life in advanced society demands an equally complex arrangement of accommodation and apartments in a house. The residence built by Anāthapindika for the Buddha and his disciples consisted of "dwelling rooms, retiring-rooms, store rooms, service halls, halls with fireplaces in them, storehouses, closets, cloisters and halls for exercise, wells and sheds for wells, bathrooms and halls attached to bathrooms, and ponds and open-roofed sheds".[11]

---

1. *Mahā Sudassana Sutta*
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Dasaka
3. *Palayi Jātaka*
4. *Vinaya*—Bodhi's mansion
5. *Ummādanti Jātaka*
6. *Sangiti Sutta*
7. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga
8. *Vinaya Piṭaka Rules*
9. *Sukara Jātaka*
10. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
11. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga VI

In the scriptures there are instances where the various parts of a house are enumerated. We read of storeyed houses with "attic, basement, cellar, store-room, refectory, fire-room, warehouse, privy, an open place to walk in, a hall to walk in, a well and a well-house.[1] There are also references to a tower, sleeping room, kitchen and stable.[2] The room mentioned as "fragrant room"[3] was probably a bedroom. Ānanda, who undertook to attend on the Buddha, did not want a separate "fragrant room" for himself.[4]

The bedrooms had curtains and moveable screens, The walls of these rooms were painted with human figures and floral designs.[5] There were lofty and large couches.[6] The beds were stuffed with cotton.[7] The bedsteads, which were covered with mosquito curtains,[8] contained mattresses, pillows, mats and sheets.[9] It was a common luxury to sleep on beds strewn with sweet-scented flowers.[10] In some houses there were long benches on the verandah.[11]

Each house had its separate apartments. There were the rooms set apart for women. Then there were the dining-rooms, the sitting rooms, the halls known as assembly-rooms, the servants quarters, and even apartments or halls with fireplaces.[11]

In palaces and large mansions, underground cellars constructed within the houses were the depositories of gold and silver and other articles of value.

The walls were usually plastered, with "imaginative drawings and figures of men and women and with wreaths and creepers".[12] The ceilings were covered with a 'ceiling cloth.'[13]

The construction of bathrooms was elaborate. The floors were laid with brick, stone or wood. The walls were also lined with brick, stone or wood. In bathrooms with fireplaces, there were chimneys, for in small bathrooms the fireplace was at one side of the room, whereas in larger ones it was in the middle.

The water was kept in an ante-chamber to the bathroom unless there was a well with fencing round it. Most bathrooms had troughs or basins. There were stools, scented clay, stands and vessels for

1. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga (Residence during rainy season)
2. *Ibid*
3. *Gandha Kutiya*
4. *Therhā Gāthā*—Ananda
5. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga VI
6. *Ibid*
7. *Vinaya Pitaka*—Rules
8. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
9. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga I
10. *Thera Gāthā*—Maha Kassapa
11. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga VI
12. *Ibid*
13. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V

water, Pots of brass, wood or clay were used to draw water. Some mansions had swimming baths where the tanks had fencing, stairs and ballustrades. Pipes were used to lay on or to drain off the water.[1]

Buddhist Indian houses were richly furnished with various kinds of chairs, tables, stands, couches and divans. There were rectangular chairs, armchairs, sofas, sofas with arms, state chairs, cushioned chairs, chairs raised on a pedestal, chairs with many legs, cane-bottomed chairs, straw-bottomed chairs and chairs with upholstered cushions to fit them.[2]

The divans and couches were covered with cushions, coverlets with long fleece, counterpanes of many colours, white woollen coverlets or coverlets with designs of flowers, cotton coverlets with figures of animals and rugs with hair in one or both sides.[3] Also, skins of lions, tigers and panthers were cut and laid out to fit couches and chairs.[3] Some couches and chairs were covered with canopies.[3]

In *Brahma Jāla Sutta* the following types of luxurious seats and rugs were disapproved for the use of the Buddha's disciples : Movable and high settees six feet long, divans with supports carved with animal figures, sofas with cushions for the head and feet ; coverlets made of fleecy goats hair or coverlets embroidered with flowers or with figures of lions or tigers, or those ornamented with gems, or those made of silk, many-coloured counterpanes, white blankets, quilts stuffed with cotton-wool, rugs with fur on both sides or on one side, rugs of antelope skins, rugs used in elephant or horse chariots, carpets with awnings about them and carpets large enough for sixteen dancers.

A Chinese record gives the following account of seats and thrones :

" When they sit or rest they all use mats ; the royal family and the great personages and assistant officers use mats variously ornamented, but in size they are the same. The throne of the reigning sovereign is large and high, and much adorned with precious gems ; it is called the lion throne (*sinhāsana*). It is covered with extremely fine drapery. The nobility use painted and enriched seats according to their taste."[4]

Wooden and wickerwork stands were used as ornaments. Sometimes they held a bowl or a vase of clever workmanship, or a lamp on a jar, or an oil lamp which burnt all night.[5] There were also cases made of ivory, bone, horn and boxes of gold and silver and bowls of sandalwood.

1. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga V
2. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga VI
3. *Ibid*
4. *Ta-Tang-Si-Ya-Ki*—Bk. II.
5. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga I

Valuable bowls or caskets of gold or silver were set with jewels. Some of them were made of beryl, crystal, copper, glass, clay or of metals such as tin, lead, bronze and iron.[1] There were also flower vases of different design and workmanship. It was a common custom among both men and women to greet one another with flowers.

The floors of some of the rooms were covered with carpets inwrought with gold or with silk, or with woollen carpets or skins such as those of the panther or of the antelope.[1]

"Cave Canem" was a warning not uncommon in ancient India. Hence the dog was a favourite pet.[2] In a palace a fierce and savage tiger was kept fastened by a strong chain.[3] Among other animals kept as pets, the most popular were parrots,[4] partridges,[5] pigeons,[6] and monkeys.[7]

It was customary to name houses. The residences built for the Buddha had names.[8] Prince Bodhi's palace was called "The Lotus".[9] A Brahamin built an assembly hall at Pātalīputta which was named after him.[10]

The rich people in those days had as a rule three residences built in different parts of the country to suit different seasons of the year.[11] The grandeur of the rich mansions could not destroy the charms of the poor cottages. The following quotation from the scriptures illustrates this :

> "There was a hut beside a hamlet. It was a pretty, charming cottage with floor and walls well made, surrounded by a park and tank, and enclosed by a path of smooth pearly sand."[12]

In towns and villages the houses of the poor were generally constructed with wood. Except in cities, however small the house be there was a garden and a compound attached to it. Sometimes a wall or usually a fence separated a house and its premises from other houses. In poor homes the garden was utilised to plant fruit, vegetables and flowers. The compound in front of a house was a bare patch of ground strewn with sand. To allow grass to grow on the compound was a mark of neglect and untidiness.

---

1. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga V
2. *Sunaka Jātaka*
3. *Kuntani Jātaka*
4. *Kaludaka Jātaka*
5. *Tittira Jātaka*
6. *Lola Jātaka*
7. *Upāli Sutta*
8. *Jētavanarāmaya, etc.*
9. *Bōdhi-Rājakumāra Sutta*
10. *Gotamukha Sutta*
11. *Thera Gāthā*—Yasa and Bhuta
12. *Thera Gāthā*—Ramaniya Kutika

CHAPTER NINE

DAILY HABITS AND CUSTOMS

CUSTOMS CHANGE and are liable to change with changes in the mentality of the people. In matters relating to private life the tendency is for the individual to be guided by his vanity and comfort. In conforming to the established standard of morals he shows the influence of society upon him.

The morning bath, which was a daily habit in ancient India, was often taken before sunrise. There were bathing costumes.[1] "Red bath-balls"[2] and bath powders,[3] took the place of soap.[2] Also the body used to be rubbed with fine lime, ointments, chunam and red arsenic.[3] Small wooden slabs or strings of beads were also used for rubbing the body.[4]

The hair was combed with combs or smoothing instruments shaped like the hood of a snake. There was a pomade made of bees-wax. Applying oil to the head and touching up the face with paint was a common usage.[4]

In *Brahmajāla Sutta* the Buddha declared the following methods of adorning and beautifying oneself to be vulgar viz. :

> "Shampooing, rubbing in scented powders, patting the limbs with clubs, use of eye ointments, rouge, cosmetics, bracelets, necklaces, garlands, head-dresses, diadems, whisks of the yak's tail white robes with long fringes and ornamented slippers ; or carrying about walking sticks, reed cases for drugs, rapiers and sunshades."

The barbers usually did the hairdressing.[5] They used mirrors, but a common substitute for mirrors was a bowl of water.[6] We read of the use of nail-cutters, nail-polishers, razors and pincers.[6] Many kinds of perfumes, ointments, and scents, which were kept in boxes of gold, silver, bone, ivory, horn, bamboo, wood and shell, were popular toilet requisites.[7] A scented powder was used also to polish bowls and such vessels.[8]

1. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
2. *Assalayana Sutta*
3. *Bakhula Sutta*
4. *Vinaya*—Kullaragga V
5. *Thera Gāthā*—Vitasōka
6. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
7. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI
8. *Theri Gāthā*—Bhaddha

On festive occasions and other significant gatherings, men and women decked themselves with wreaths and garlands made by those trained in the art of garland-making.[1] The fondness of jewellery was not confined to women, for some of the men wore " ear-rings, ear-drops, strings of beads for the neck, girdles of beads, bangles, necklaces, bracelets and rings[2] made of gold, silver or ivory, beset with various kinds of gems such as pearls, diamonds, cats-eye, chank, coral, ruby and cornelian ".[3] The ear-ring of a wealthy councillor of Avanti was said to be worth a core.[4] A special kind of ring was described as a signet ring.[5]

Men and women of Buddhist India used to carry fans and sunshades. The custom is kept up even to this day by the Buddhist monks (Bhikkhus). The more valuable fans were decorated with peacock feathers and with gems, but fans made of grass, wood and palm-leaves were common.[6] When a nobleman went out, his sunshade was held over him by an attendant.[6]

The dress of the people varied according to the rank or the official position they held. The king and the royalty, the nobles and the ministers, the soldiers and their commanders had a uniform which they wore on ceremonial occasions. Also on grounds of convenience and practical utility people engaged in different occupations wore a dress to suit the trade or occupation they were engaged in. In spite of such differences, there was the general dress of the ordinary citizen. This was more or less like the Roman toga. Buddha and his disciples did not wear a fantastic dress different from the ordinary citizen, except in the colour and the mode of stitching it. In the traditional dress of the Buddhist monks, the close resemblance to the Roman toga can be detected. While the Buddhists retained the dress as necessary both for convenience and decency, yet in the days of the Buddha there was a sect of nudists who tried to gain popularity and followers to their creed by showing that they were free from all desires so that they considered even dress unnecessary.

A robe or a kind of cloak was the customary outer garment, without which it was not proper to go on a visit.[7] " The householder, Poraliya, was in full attire of long tunic and long cloak with umbrella and

1. *Upāli Sutta*
2. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
3. *Kasava Jātaka* & *Vinaya*—Kullavagga
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Sona Kutikanna
5. *Kāliṅga Bodhi Jātaka*
6. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Vaddha

sandals".[1] The expensive robes were made of cloth of gold.[2] The different colours and patterns of robes in use are suggested by the following passage :

"They wore robes of blue, light yellow, crimson, brown, black, brownish-yellow, or dark-yellow colour. They wore robes with skirts to them which were long and had flowers on them".[3] The kinds of cloth commonly used for garments were linen, cotton, silk, wool, coarse cloth and hempen cloth.[3] Kasi cloth and Benares muslin were expensive. Special dyes were used to give colour to cloth and garments.[4]

To clean clothes the "washerwoman rubs the soiled cloth smooth with salt, earth or lye or cowdry, and rinses it in pure clean water. Then the owners lay it up in a sweet-scented coffer".[5] Garments were also perfumed with incense.[6]

There was elaborate footwear. The shoes had one or more linings. The edges and the heels of shoes were of different colours. The slippers and moccasins were blue, yellow, red, brown, black, orange or yellow in colour. The boots were also of different colours. They were laced or lined with cotton and were ornamented with horns and feathers. Both boots and shoes were adorned with skins. The ornaments for shoes were of gold, silver, pearl, beryl, crystal, copper, glass, tin, lead or bronze. Among other kinds of shoes were those made of wool, talipot leaves and different kinds of grass.[7]

The Indika of Arrican gives the following account of ancient Indian dress :

"The dress worn by the Indians is made of cotton as Nearchos tells us. They wore an undergarment of cotton which reaches below the knee, halfway down to the ankles, and also an upper garment which they throw partly over their shoulders and partly twist in folds round their head. The Indians wear also ear-rings of ivory, but only such of them do this as are very wealthy for all Indians do not wear them. Their beards, Nearchos tells us, they dye of one hue and another according to taste . . . . Such Indians, he also says, as are thought anything of, use parasols as a screen from the heat. They wear shoes made of white leather and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are varigated and made of great thickness to make the wearer so much the taller."—Ch. XVI.

1. *Potaliya Sutta*
2. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*
3. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga VIII
4. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga V
5. *Sanyutta Nikāya* XXII
6. *Mayhaka Jātaka*
7. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga V

The description of dress in the Chinese records shows that dresses in the days of the Buddha had not materially changed :

> "The Kshattryiyas and the Brahmans are cleanly and wholesome in their dress, and they live in a homely and frugal way. The king of the country and the great ministers wear garments and ornaments different in their character. They use flowers for decorating their hair, with gem-decked caps ; they ornament themselves with bracelets and necklaces. There are rich merchants who deal exclusively in gold trinkets and so on. They mostly go barefooted ; few wear sandals. They stain their teeth red or black ; they bind up their hair and pierce their ears ; they ornament their noses.
>
> "Their clothing is not cut or fashioned ; they mostly affect fresh white garments. They esteem little those ornamented or of mixed colour. The men wind their garments round their middle, then gather them under the armpits, and let them fall down across the body hanging to the right. The robes of the women fall down to the ground ; they completely cover their shoulders. They wear a little knot of hair on their crowns and let the rest of their hair fall loose. Some of the men cut off their moustaches and have other odd customs. On their heads people wear caps (crowns) with flower wreaths and jewelled necklets. Their garments are made of Kiau-she-ye and of cotton. Kiau-she-ye is the product of the wild silk-worm. They have garments also of Tso'-mo which is a sort of hemp ; garments also made of Kien-po-lo which is woven from fine goat hair ; garments also made from Ho-la-li. This stuff is made from the fine hair of a wild animal ; it is seldom this can be woven, and therefore the stuff is very valuable, and it is regarded as fine clothing."[1]

The variety, refinement and even luxury of food arise out of a country's prosperity. Copious examples of such marks of prosperity are found in the scriptures. A refinement in diet was brought about by Buddhist culture. Before and after a meal everyone washed their mouths and cleaned their teeth. This habit is kept up to this day by Buddhists. A Chinese traveller has recorded this fact :

> "They are very particular in their personal cleanliness and allow no remissness in this particular. All wash themselves before eating ; they never use that which has been left over ; they do not pass the dishes. Wooden and stone vessels when used must be destroyed ;

1. *Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Yi* (Buddhist Records of the Western World) Bk. II

vessels of gold, silver, copper or iron after each meal must be rubbed and polished. After eating they cleanse their teeth with a willow stick and wash their hands and mouth. Until these ablutions are finished they do not touch one another. Every time they perform the functions of nature they wash their bodies and use perfumes of sandalwood and turmeric. When the king washes they strike the drums and sing hymns to the sound of musical instruments. Before offering their religious services and petitions they wash and bathe themselves."[1]

In the days of the Buddha there were three chief meals a day. People had meals in the morning, in the evening and in the afternoon. "The dainty dishes all came in the evening".[2] Those of the Buddha's order took only the morniñg and the mid-day meals. They were prevented from over-indulgence in food. It was a habit among some Indians to eat their food lying on decorated divans,[3] just as the ancient Romans. Even that habit was disapproved of for the followers of the Buddha.

Ancient Indians were great meat eaters. Large numbers of animals used to be slaughtered as sacrifices to gods by the Brahamin priests. That custom reminds us of the Roman sacrifices to the gods. At a banquet given by an Indian minister of the king two-hundred and fifty different dishes of meat were served.[4] also, a prince of Kapilavāsthu was able to enjoy food of a hundred flavours at every meal.[5]

It was Buddhist influence that made vegetable diet popular in India. The Buddha preached against killing animals even for food and subsequently Emperor Asoka made it illegal to kill animals.

Apart from special delicacies, some popular dishes consisted of rice and junkets,[6] rice porridge prepared with honey or sugar,[7] rice cakes and honey,[7] soup and boiled rice, and rice boiled in milk. Ghee, butter, oil, sugar and honey were used for food in many ways.[8]

Food was served in bowls and dishes of gold, silver, copper, iron or clay, according to the rank and wealth of the person. As fingers were used instead of forks, washing of hands before and after meals was a habit. It was also a long standing custom to wash the mouth before and after every meal.[9] The water used for drinking was strained.[10] Taking meals together was a sign of equality and friendship.[11] As a

1. *Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki*—Bk. II
2. *Lutuki Kopama Sutta*
3. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga V
4. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI
5. *Thera Gāthā*—Paripunnaka
6. *Maha Saccaka Sutta*
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Gogala
8. *Thera Gāthā*—Bhaleya
9. *Vinaya*—Rules
10. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
11. *Bhaddasāla Jātaka*

mark of respect the host or hostess served the guests,[1] and "nothing would be asked from a stranger about himself before he finished his meal."[2]

Vinaya rules contain the table manners of Buddhist India.[3] Though the rules were meant for members of the order, they could be counted as the generally accepted forms of propriety at meals.

The prohibition of the use of intoxicants was another social reform brought about by the Buddha. He made abstinence from intoxicants one of the five precepts to be observed daily by all Buddhists. The habit of taking intoxicating liquors was so popular at that time among certain classes that a special day was observed as a drinking festival. Many kinds of sweet and un-intoxicating drinks were used daily. There were drinks made from the juice of fruits such as mangoes, bananas, grapes, from syrups and honey, and from roots, corn, leaves and sugar cane.[4] Various kinds of drinks were made of milk. "Milk with a pungent drug was drunk to avoid getting a chill after water-sports."[5]

Book II of Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki gives the following account of Indian food:

> "Among the products of the ground, rice and corn are most plentiful. With respect to edible herbs and plants, we may name ginger and mustard, melons and pumpkins, the heun-to plant and others. Onions and garlic are little grown and few persons eat them. If any one uses them for food, they are expelled beyond the walls of the town. The most usual food is milk, butter, cream, soft sugar, sugar-candy, the oil of the mustard-seed, and all sorts of cakes made of corn are used as food. Fish, mutton, gazelle and deer they eat generally fresh, sometimes salted; they are forbidden to eat the flesh of the ox, the ass, the elephant, the horse, the pig, the dog, the fox, the wolf, the lion, the monkey, and all the hairy kind. Those who eat them are despised and scorned, and are universally reprimanded; they live outside the walls, and are seldom seen among men.
>
> With respect to the different kinds of wine and liquors, there are various sorts. The juice of the grape and the sugar cane, these are used by the Kshattriyas as drink; the Sramans and Brahamans drink a sort of syrup made from the grape or sugar-cane, but not of the nature of fermented wine."

1. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga I
2. *Takka Jātaka*
3. *Vinya*—Sekkiya Dhamma
4. *Vinya*—Maha Vagga V
5. *Kalundaka Jātaka*

The ancient methods of conveyance and transport used were dependent on the distance to be travelled and on the wealth and rank of the traveller. Palanquins, sedan chairs, and litters borne by servants or attendants were in general use for informal and short visits.[1] Long journeys were usually undertaken on horseback.[2] On state occasions and important functions, kings and wealthy nobles rode on elephants.[3] In riding elephants it was the master or the chief who had to alight first from the elephant.[4]

Caravan parties conveyed merchandise from one kingdom to another by carts drawn by bulls.[5] There were also carriages,[6] chariots and state carriages which were drawn by horses.[7] People of distinction went about in carriages drawn by four horses as shown by the following quotations :

"King Videha happened to be in a magnificent carriage drawn by four milk-white horses."[8]

"The Brahamin Janussoni, was coming out of the city early in the day in a carriage which was all white and was drawn by four white mares."[9]

A chariot was described in the scriptures as "adorned with jewels and gold and drawn by high-bred horses."[10]

Here is a graphic description of a king's evening visit to the Buddha :

"King Ajatasattu had five hundred she-elephants made ready and also the State elephant which the king was wont to ride. Then the king had five hundred of the ladies of the court mounted on the she-elephants, one on each, and he himself mounting on the state-elephant went forth, with the attendants bearing torches, in royal procession from Rājagaha to the pleasure-garden known as 'Givaka's Mango Grove'."[11]

Large numbers of attendants and retainers often accompanied the men of distinction on their journeys, so it was customary for such persons to have many carriages or chariots. For instance, "Siha, the commander-in-chief went out of the city of Vesāli with 500 chariots".[12] A young lady, Visākā, went with a large number of maidens in their chariots to welcome the Buddha to their city.[13] There were also

1. *Vinaya*—Maha Vagga V
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Mahā Kappina
3. *Junha Jātaka*
4. *Kusa Jātaka*
5. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga V
6. *Cūla-Hattipadopama Sutta*
7. *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*
8. *Vinilaka Jātaka*
9. *Cūla-hatti-padopama Sutta*
10. *Mayhaka Jātaka*
11. *Samaññā-Phala Sutta*
12. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI
13. *Dhamapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākhā

examples of women driving their own chariots, or even racing with men. Ambapāli made a number of magnificent chariots to be prepared and mounted on one of them and went out of Vesāli to visit the Buddha. She drove up against the young Lichchavis, pole to pole, yoke to yoke, wheel to wheel, axle to axle."[1]

In some vehicles musicians were taken so that they might play their music on the journey. If the chariot contained the owner or the chief rider, the musicians sat in the front part of the carriage, otherwise the musicians sat behind the carriage.

When guests were expected the host went to meet and accompany them home. If he went in a chariot he would stop it and walk a short distance to greet his guests.[2] Expressions of greeting and compliments of civility were usual at meetings and partings.[3]

When visiting, a person's presence was announced through a servant or porter.[4] Also a person would knock at a door before entering a private room.[5] The guests often took flowers to the host. It was a common custom to greet with flowers or send wreaths and nosegays to one another,[6] or throw flowers from the balcony to honour a distinguished passer-by.[7] It was a mark of civility to rise to meet a person.[8] Towards guests or strangers the people were particularly civil, " for all recluses and Brahamins who came within the precincts of a village were considered guests, to be treated with honour and reverence, with devotion and worship."[9]

When taking leave of one's betters, after bowing down, one would pass round them with one's right side towards them.[10] In a stranger's house it was thought to be decorous to be properly clad, the body to be under proper control without swaying the body, arms or head, not to walk on heels or toes, and not to laugh loud."[11]

1. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI
2. *Maha Janaka Jātaka*
3. *Madura Sutta*
4. *Upāli Sutta*
5. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VI
6. *Vinaya*—Kullavagga I
7. *Ummadanti Jātaka*
8. *Asampadāna Jātaka*
9. *Canki Sutta*
10. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga I
11. *Vinaya*—Sekhiya Dhamma

AMUSEMENTS

THE NATIONAL sports and amusements evolve from experience. Games and pastimes reveal the character, not only of those who partake in them, but also of those who witness them. Different games appeal differently to different minds. While the undeveloped mind can be easily satisfied, the cultured mind demands a higher standard of skill and effort in sport and amusement. Also, some games are maintained by the interest which the public have in them. Such games die out with the loss of that interest.

Music, dancing and singing, as in all communities, were in ancient India popular forms of entertainment. "Men and women used to dance and sing and play music together".[1] Dancing was evidently done on special kinds of carpet which were described as "large woollen carpets such as the dancing girls dance upon."[2] Another type was a carpet large enough for sixteen dancers.[3]

Although the rich nobles had in their houses female musicians and dancers to entertain them, yet the artists of reputation displayed their talent in their own houses to the audience that came to them. Such an artist was Ambapāli, who was "beautiful, graceful, pleasant, gifted with the highest beauty of complexion, well-versed in dancing, singing and lute-playing".[4] An equally clever artist was Sālāvathi of Rājagaha, who charged enormous sums from those who wished to be entertained by her music and dancing.[5]

Tālaputta of Rājagaha was the famous actor of his day. He toured through India with his company of actors. "With 500 actresses and with spectacular grandeur he attended festivals in villages, towns and palaces and won great fame".[6] Also festive occasions attracted another class of strolling players.[7] Just as the actors, dancers and musicians strolled about the country, there were the jugglers,[8] snake-charmers and acrobats who showed their feats of dancing through four or five javelins.[9]

1. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga I
2. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga V
3. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
4. *Vinaya*—Mahavagga VIII
5. *Ibid*
6. *Thera Gāta*—Tālaputta
7. *Kanavara Jātaka*
8. *Sanyutta Nikāya* XXII
9. *Dubbaca Jātaka*

The popular entertainments of those days consisted of dancing, singing, instrumental music, shows at fairs, recitations, playing on cymbals, chanting of bards, combats of elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, goats, rams, cocks and quails, bouts at quarter-staff, boxing, wrestling, sham fights, forces drawn up in battle array, manoeuvres, and reviews of the army.[1]

These amusements attracted large crowds to the parks and pleasure-gardens, especially on holidays.[2]

On special occasions processions round the city were arranged,[3] when numbers of gaily decorated elephants joined the procession.[4] The visits of kings or nobles to the pleasure-gardens with the ladies of the court was a grand spectacle.[5] The pleasure-gardens were also places of amusement for children and animal lovers, for birds and animals kept there used to be fed by the visitors. Feeding the peacocks in the "Wanderers" Pleasaunce,[6] and the squirrels in the Bamboo Grove,[7] was an amusement of the visitors to those parks.

Out-door sports had their champions, Vīra won fame through his athletic accomplishments and became a warrior.[8] A favourite sport of athletes was wrestling which created much public enthusiasm. The following passage shows the excitement of the people over wrestling matches :

> "So they sent for two wrestlers, Canura and Mutthika, and proclaimed through the city by beat of drum that on the seventh day there would be a wrestling match. The wrestling ring was prepared in front of the king's palace. There was an enclosure for the sport. The ring was decorated gaily. The flags of victory were raised. The whole city was in a whirl. The seats rose line over line, tier above tier."[9]

Boxing as a sport seems to have been of ancient origin for mention was made of boxing with fists.[10] Some out-door sports aimed at different methods of physical training. There were the water-sports when contestants vied with one another in feats of swimming and diving.[11] Young ladies also appeared to have enjoyed water-sports.[12]

---

1. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
2. *Sulasa Jātaka*
3. *Dummedda Jātaka*
4. *Susima Jātaka*
5. *Mātanga Jātaka*
6. *Mahā-Sakuludayi Sutta*
7. *Chula-Sakuludayi Sutta*
8. *Thera Gātā*—Vīra
9. *Ghata Jātaka*
10. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga I
11. *Kalunduka Jātaka*
12. *Dhammapada Atthakatā*—Visākā

The abundance of indoor and outdoor games and sports shows an aspect of social activities. Some of the popular games or sports were "tossing up eight or ten objects, hopping over diagrams on the ground, removing objects from a heap without moving the rest, games at dice trap-ball, sketching figures, tossing balls, blowing trumpets, mock ploughing, matches with mimic ploughs, tumbling, guessing at measures, chariot races, contests in archery, shooting marbles with fingers, guessing other people's thoughts, mimicking other people's acts, elephant riding, horse-riding, carriage driving, archery, swordsmanship, running to and fro in front of elephants, horses and carriages."[1]

A game is described as played on boards with eight or ten rows of squares. This might be an early form of chess, for some of the pieces used in the game are called kings and men. The same game was played on imaginary boards.[2] Throwing dice and marking the scores on a board was another popular game.[2]

There were children's games, as ploughing with toy ploughs, playing with toy windmills, toy carts, toy bows or toy measures. Playing on pipes was a common amusement.[2]

Of the outdoor games, the common ones were games with balls, hopping over diagrams drawn on the ground, hitting a short stick with a long one and turning somersaults.[2]

In ancient India, chariot races and horse racing attracted crowds to the race courses near the principal cities, for driving chariots and riding horses were practised both as an art as well as an accomplishment, chiefly by the warriors, for whom archery and swordsmanship were considered essential arts. There had been contests to display feats in archery.[3]

Of the many kinds of contests, the most popular were the musical contests. It was customary for those in the audience to shower presents on the winner.

A well-known musical contest between a teacher and his pupil was thus described :

> "The king sent a proclamation by the beat of drum that on the seventh day Guttila, the teacher and Mūsila, the pupil, will meet before the palace to show their skill, and asked the people of the city to assemble to witness the contest . . . . At the gate of the palace a pavilion was erected with a throne set apart for the king. The king

1. *Vinaya*—Chullavagga I
2. *Brahma-J la Sutta*
3. *Asadisa Jātaka*

came down from the palace and took his seat in the gorgeously decorated pavilion. All around him were thousands of attendants, beautifully dressed women, courtiers, Brahamins and citizens. The whole city had come together. The seats were fixed, circle on circle and tier above tier."[1]

To those with any aversion to the gay amusements, there were the intellectual ones. They crowded to listen to learned men and philosophers. They took keen interest in able debates. "Once five hundred of the Lichchavis were met in their assembly house on some business. They were invited to the debate which Saccaka was to have with the Buddha".[2] The men and women dialectitians who went about the country also were listened to by the city or village crowds.

Games which in course of time came under taboo were due to social or religious influences. Gambling of all kinds was condemned so that the gambler found it difficult to contract a good marriage. Through the influence of the Buddha's teaching the rights of animals for kind treatment was recognised. All games and sports involving the wounding or killing of animals were considered wicked and cruel. Thus hunting as a sport became unpopular.

Games give an insight into the minds of not only those who take part in them, but also those who witness them. Among children's games were such as running against the wind objects that turn with the wind,[3] or removing heaped up pebbles or objects one by one so that the others do not tumble down, or team games where a small stump thrown by one party is hit with a stick by those of the other party in turn and scoring according to the distance they hit the stump.[4] A game of guessing for children was to place tiny sticks in shapes of animals or objects and covering them with the hands, asking those taking part in the game to guess what the sticks represented. Those who guessed correctly won.[5]

There was a game similar to blind man's buff where a child played as blind or lame by hopping on one foot.[6] Some children amused themselves by asking others to guess the letters they traced with their fingers in the air or on the backs of other children.[7] The game of guessing numbers or the thoughts of other children was popular with the bigger children.[8]

---

1. *Guttila Jātaka*
2. *Cūla Saccaka Sutta*
3. *Chingulaka*
4. *Gatika*
5. *Salaka Rattha*
6. *Yathavagga*
7. *Akkanka*
8. *Manesika*

When out-door play-grounds could not be used owing to bad weather, halls for play were arranged for children. The following passage from the scriptures is noteworthy :

" A hall for play ought to be built here, we will not play in this way ", and he said to the boys : " Let us build a hall here where we can stand, sit or lie in time of wind, hot sunshine or rain."[1]

1. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka*

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BELIEFS AND FAITHS

THE LESS enlightened members of a community not only cherish and cling to the superstitions of their forefathers, but they even hand down their own additions and modifications. Throughout the ages, the beliefs and faiths of people do not remain the same, but are modified or even rejected according to the changes in religion or advancement of knowledge. Scientific knowledge and reason are the enemies of superstition and blind faith. The rational standpoint of Buddhism tended to destroy superstitions. With the decay of Buddhist culture in India new faiths and superstitions began to grow and with the aid of the priests they even received religious sanction. Most superstitions and beliefs which existed among ancient people were not recorded but handed down from generation to generation. There are incidental records of some superstitions in the scriptures.

Dreams have puzzled people of all times. In the days of the Buddha the Indians considered dreams to have a significance as indications of impending good or bad fortune. The strange dreams of King Kōsala were interpreted as premonitions of the coming dangers to his kingdom, and the augurers advised the king to prepare a great sacrifice of various kinds of animals to avert the danger by appeasing the gods. The slaughter of animals was stopped by the Buddha's advice to the king.[1]

The mother of Prince Siddhārtha dreamt of a small white elephant on a lotus prior to her conception. Princess Māddi dreamt about the loss of her eyes and her husband knew that this meant parting from her children, yet consoled her by saying : "Your mind must have been disturbed by uneasy sleep or by indigestion ; fear nothing."[2]

Here is a dream that disturbed the mind of a king : "Four columns of fire blazed up in the four corners of the royal court as high as the great wall, and in the midst of them rose a flame of the size of a firefly, and in a moment it suddenly exceeded the four columns of fire and rose up as high as the Brahma world and illumined the whole world ; even a grain of mustard seed lying on the ground is distinctly seen. Gods and men worshipped it with flowers and incense. A vast multitude passed through this flame but not even a hair of their skin was singed."[3]

1. *Mahā Supina Sutta* 2. *Vessantara Jātaka* 3. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka*

The four wise men of the king came in the morning to interpret the dream. They said: " O, king, a fifth sage will be born who will surpass us four, we four are like the four columns of fire, but in the midst of these there will arise as it were a fifth column of fire, one who is unparalleled and fills a post which is unequalled in the whole world of gods and men."

Queen Khēmā of Benares saw in a dream a deer of golden colour and she thought : " If there were no such creature as this, I should not have seen him in my dream. Surely there must be such a one."[1]

Akin to prophetic dreams were omens. They were classified as omens of sight, omens of sound and omens of touch. " The sight of anything with a happy look is a good omen ; suppose a man rises betimes and sees a perfectly white bull, or a woman with child, or a red fish, or a jar filled to the brim, or new melted ghee of cow's milk, there is no omen better than these."[2]

" What you hear is the omen. A man hears people saying " full ", then he hears " full-grown " or " growing " or he hears them say " eat " or " chew " there is no omen better than these."[3]

" What you touch is the omen. If a man gets up early and touches the earth, or touches green grass, fresh cow dung, a clean robe, a red fish, gold or silver or food, there is no better omen than these."[4]

Such diverse opinions led to a controversy when the Buddhist explanation of things to be considered fortunate was given as the possessing of a kind and compassionate heart towards all beings, being cheerful and modest, not despising others and not being proud of birth, wisdom, wealth or class, having true and good friends, having a wife of equal years devoted, faithful, virtuous and the mother of many children, having a king who loves his people, being generous and charitable and trying to purify one's life by strenuous effort. It was declared that there was no truth in omens.[5]

Among unlucky things were the sight of a man of low mentality,[6] the evil effect of which was removed by washing the eyes with perfumed water.[7]

Queen Māddi believed the following to be bad omens as she had experienced them before her children were taken away from her when they were living is a forest hermitage :

1. *Ruru Jātaka*
2. *Mahā-Maṅgala Jātaka*
3. *Ibid*
4. *Ibid*
5. *Ibid*
6. *Mātanga Jātaka*
7. *Citta-Sambhuta Jātaka*

"The spade fell from her hand, the basket fell from her shoulders, her right eye went a-throbbing, fruit trees appeared as barren and barren trees as fruitful and she could not detect the right direction."[1]

Many superstitions also arose from the notion that certain things were lucky or unlucky. Good or ill-luck was even attached to names,[2] for a person became prosperous or otherwise according to the name given to him. There is an instance where it was believed unlucky for the residents of a certain house to use an inmate's name as "Kāla-kanni" (the miserable).[3]

A king employed a Brahamin who professed to know the lucky and unlucky sounds. When the smiths forged swords, he by smelling them, would declare those swords lucky which were made by smiths who bribed him. A smith put pepper in the sheath of a sword which a Brahamin put near his nose and sneezed, thereby injuring his nose.[4]

Some animals were also believed to possess special powers of luck. Prince Vessāntara had a pure white elephant and in whatever country it lived there was no drought.[5] People used to blame the king if their harvests failed or other misfortunes fell upon the country. They believed that if a king was unrighteous the gods either sent no rain or sent it out of season.[6]

There were professors of the knowledge of signs in the following things, denoting health or luck to their owners: gems, ear-rings, staves, dresses, swords, arrows, bows, dangerous weapons, women, men, boys, girls, servants, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, oxen, goats, sheep, fowls, iguanas, tortoises and other animals.[7]

A person's luck they sometimes attributed to an object possessed by that person. This notion was developed into a transference of luck from one object or person to another. So a Brahamin went to the mansion of Anāthapindika, who from poverty had risen to be very rich. He thought the rich man's luck was in his white cock, and when he took the fowl, the luck went to a jewel, and when that was stolen the luck went into a club and with the removal of the club it went into the rich man's wife's head, so that the good luck could not be stolen. When the Buddha heard about it he said: "Nowadays the good luck of one man does not go to another. Formerly, the luck belonging to those of small wit went to the wise."[8]

1. *Vessantara Jātaka*
2. *Nāmasiddhi Jātaka*
3. *Kālakanni Jātaka*
4. *Asilakkhana Jātaka*
5. *Vessantara Jātaka*
6. *Maincora Jātaka*
7. *Brahma-Jāla Sutta*
8. *Siri Jātaka*

There were different methods of prognostication. A Brahamin who saw clothes gnawed by a mouse thought : " If these clothes remain in the house they will bring ill-luck, and such an ill-omened thing is sure to bring a curse.[1]

Two young men after their education were travelling when they came to Benares. That day some men thought of offering food to Brahamins and seeing the young men they brought them into the house where seats were prepared. On one seat a white cloth was spread, on the other a red woollen rug. On seeing the omen, the friend who sat on the red rug understood that his friend who sat on the seat with the white cloth would be king, and that he would be the commander-in-chief.[2]

Prognostications were also done by reading the lineaments of the body.[3] From the personal appearance of a prince of Benares it was known that he was to undergo great danger.

Physiognomy was the basis for reading character and luck.[4] Guttila, the royal musician, at the first sight of Mūsila knew him to be of ungrateful disposition.

Telling fortunes with the aid of stars was popular. At the birth of a child a certain Brahamin looked up to the sky to divine his son's destiny. Because the child was born under a certain conjunction of stars the father knew that the boy would be the chief archer in all India.[5]

A marriage was once prevented by an ascetic who was asked to name an auspicious day. He answered that the stars were not favourable and that the nuptials ought not to be celebrated on that day, and that, if they were, great misfortune would come of it. The Buddha taught that it was the fools who watched for " lucky days".[6]

Fortune telling was a vulgar practice. There were many women fortune-tellers.[7] Seeing the futility of the practice the Buddha condemned the following as low and vulgar :

" Palmistry, divining by means of omens and signs, auguries drawn from thunderbolts and celestial potents, prognostication by interpreting dreams, fortune-telling from marks on the body, auguries from cloth gnawed by mice, sacrifices to the god of Fire, oblations from special spoons, making offerings of husks, grain, ghee and oil to gods, throwing mustard seed into the fire out of one's mouth as a sacrifice, drawing blood as a sacrifice, muttering charms and divining people to be lucky

1. *Maṅgala Jātaka*
2. *Sonaka Jātaka*
3. *Ummadanthi*
4. *Guttila Jātaka*
5. *Savabhanga Jātaka*
6. *Nakkhatta Jātaka*
7. *Sanyutta Nikāya*

or not, determining the site for a house to be lucky or not, advising on customary rites, laying demons in cemeteries, laying ghosts, charms used when lodging in a house, snake charming, poison craft, scorpion craft, mouse-craft, bird-craft, crow-craft, i.e., curing their bites or understanding their language or divining from their sounds, foretelling the length of a person's life, giving charms to ward off arrows and understanding the language of all creatures."[1]

There were also people who professed to foretell eclipses of the sun, moon or stars, fall of meteors, earthquakes and thunder, and also predicting more or less rain, good harvest or bad harvest, pestilence or healthy seasons and times of peace or of disturbance.[2]

Charms were used to make people prosperous or poor, and to make them deaf or dumb. In the practice of magic it is said that magicians were able to spout forth flames from their mouths. Oracular answers were obtained through magic mirrors or from gods or from girls in trances. Auspicious or lucky days were selected for various purposes such as marriage, concluding peace treaties, or starting wars, calling in of debts or investing money. Siri, the God of Luck, used often to be invoked.[3] Sacrifices and vows to gods were made before going on a journey or starting any important undertaking. Tradition says that in those days people, when going on a journey on business, used to slay living creatures and offer them as sacrifices to gods, and set out with this vow : "If we come back safely with success we shall make another sacrifice ".[4] Sacrifices of animals used to be made at a feast called the feast for the dead.

The disciples asked the Buddha : "Just now, Sir, the people are killing many living creatures and are offering them at what is called a feast for the dead. Can it be, Sir, that there is any good in it ?"

"No, disciples ", replied the Master. "Not even when life is taken with the object of providing a feast for the dead does any good arise therefrom."[5]

In *Kutadanta Sutta*, the Buddha referred to that sacrifice which was done without killing or harm to anyone. At that sacrifice neither were any oxen slain, neither goats, nor fowls, nor fatted pigs, nor were any kinds of living creatures put to death. No trees were cut down to be

1. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
2. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
3. *Brahmajāla Sutta*
4. *Ayācitabhatta Jātaka*
5. *Matakabhatta Jātaka*

used as posts, no 'dabbha' grasses woven to strew around the sacrificial spot. And the menial servants and messengers and workmen there employed were driven neither by goads nor fear, nor carried on their work weeping with tears upon their faces. Who so chose to help, he worked, who so chose not to help, worked not ; what each chose to do, he did, what they chose not to do, that was left undone. With ghee, and oil, and butter, and milk, and honey, and sugar only was that sacrifice accomplished.

Then he explained what a real sacrifice is. When a man with trusting heart takes upon himself the precepts—abstinence from destroying life ; abstinence from taking what has not been given ; abstinence from evil conduct in respect of unlawful sensual pleasures ; abstinence from intoxicants ; that is a sacrifice better than alms, gifts, etc.

The Buddhists had no faith in divination, spells, omens, astrology, sacrifices to gods, witch-craft and quackery, which were considered low arts.[1]

In the days of the Buddha there were ascetics and others who believed self-mortification to be a method of salvation. Some ascetics preferred to be naked, others wore blankets or hides or coarse cloth woven from hemp, or dresses made of the bark of trees, or of grass, or of feathers.[2]

Self-mortification had taken peculiar forms of depravity. There were filth eaters, non-drinkers, those who always stood up, rejecting the use of seats. Some would always sleep on one side, while others would crouch down on their heels or sleep on thorny or spiky beds.[3]

It was a popular belief in those days that people possessed occult or mystic powers. He who had such powers became multiform, from being multiform he became one ; from being visible he became invisible ; he passed without hindrance to the further side of a wall or a battlement or a mountain as if through air ; he penetrated up and down through solid ground as if through water ; he walked through water without dividing it as if on solid ground ; he travelled crosslegged through the sky like birds on wing ; he touched and felt with the hand even Moon and Sun, beings of mystic power and potency though they be ; he reached even in the body up the heaven of Brahma, made manifest the heart and the feelings, the reasonings and thoughts of other individuals.[4]

The Buddha condemned all such practices and pointed out the middle path which is free from indulgence in sensuality and self-mortification.

1. *Vinaya*—Cullavagga V
2. *Kassapa Sīhanāda Sutta*
3. *Kassapa Sīhanāda Sutta*
4. *Kevaddha Sutta*

EDUCATION

THE STANDARDS and methods of education adopted at various epochs in a nation's history depend partly on the requirements of the times and partly on the culture of the people. The system of education in Buddhist and pre-Buddhist India is sufficient to prove the high culture of the time.

The Buddhist influence brought free education within the reach of all. Wherever there was a residence of the monks or nuns (Bikkus Bikkunees), there was provision made for education of those who lived near them.

In the Buddhist Order two paths are open to members. Some undertook to teach while leading the life of discipline, while others devoted most of their time to meditation and mental development.

Free schools began to be opened in almost every village, and for higher or specialised education culture centres as residential universities were opened, of which Nālandā was the most famous.

In pre-Buddhist India a learned man's qualification was his knowledge of the three Vedas. Most teachers were described as masters in the Vedas. Pindola Bhāradvaja was learned in the three Vedas and was a successful teacher of the Brahamin youths, also Tissa of Rajagaha, an expert in Vedas, taught hymns to five hundred boys.[1]

The knowledge of the Vedas was an educational qualification in pre-Buddhist India. After the spread of Buddhism, scholarship began to be gauged by the knowledge of the Three "Piṭakas" (Buddhist teachings). Hence people came to be known as the master of one or more of the three "piṭakas".

Tripiṭaka consists of :

I.—SUTTA PITAKA

1. *Dīgha Nikāya* — Long Discourses
2. *Majjhima Nikāya* — Middle Discourses
3. *Sanyutta Nikāya* — Kindred Sayings
4. *Aṅguttara Nikāya* — Qualitative (classified) Discourses
5. *Kuddaka Nikāya* — Smaller Collections

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Pindola & Tissa

The 5th is sub-divided into :

	(*a*) *Kuddaka pāṭa*	—	Short Texts
	(*b*) *Dhamma pada*	—	Words of Truth
	(*c*) *Udāna*	—	Exclamations of Joy
	(*d*) *Itivuttaka*	—	"Thus Said" Discourses
6.	*Sutta Nipāta*	—	Collected Discourses
7.	*Vimāna Vatthu*	—	Treatise on Abodes
8.	*Petavatthu*	—	Treatise on Spirits
9.	*Thera Gātha*	—	Psalms of Brethren
10.	*Theri Gātha*	—	Psalms of the Sisters
11.	*Jātaka*	—	Birth Stories
12.	*Niddesa*	—	Expositions
13.	*Paṭisambhidāmagga*	—	Path of Analytical Knowledge
14.	*Apadāna*	—	Lives of Arahants
15.	*Buddhawaṃsa*	—	The History of the Buddhas
16.	*Chariyā-piṭaka*	—	Modes of Conduct

II.—Vinaya Pitaka

1.	*Pārājikā Pāli*	—	Major Offences
2.	*Pācittiya Pāli*	—	Minor Offences
3.	*Mahāvagga Pāli*	—	Greater Sections
4.	*Cullavagga Pāli*	—	Smaller Sections
5.	*Parivāra Pāli*	—	Epitome of the Vinaya

III.—Abhidhamma Pitaka

1.	*Dhamma Saṅganī*	—	Classification of Concepts
2.	*Vibhaṅga*	—	The Book of Divisions
3.	*Dhātukathā*	—	Discussion with Reference to Elements
4.	*Puggalapaññatti*	—	Types of Individuals
5.	*Kathāvatthu*	—	Points of Controversy
6.	*Yamaka*	—	The Book of the Pairs
7.	*Paṭṭhāna*	—	The Book of Relative Condition

The principal method of instruction was by paying personal attention to each pupil so that a teacher with a great reputation attracted pupils from even remote kingdoms. Takkasilā and Bārānesi (Benares) were cities noted for clever teachers who trained their pupils successfully.

After the period of study under the supervision of the teacher, as a part of their education the students travelled to gain experience. Here is a typical description of a student :

" He studied under a teacher of world-wide fame at Takkasilā. He learned the three Vedas and the eighteen branches of knowledge. After completing his education he came to Andhāra country in search of practical experience."[1]

Some keen students completed their studies under one teacher and then went to others to find out whether they had anything more to teach them. So Bhaddha Kundalakesa in her thirst for knowledge went wherever there were learned people and learnt from them.[2]

Children received their early education usually at home or in schools near their homes. The rich were able to employ special private tutors for their children. Reference to the custom is made in the following passage :

" When the rich man's son was being taught to write, the child of a servant used to go with his young master's tablets, and he himself learned to write at the same time."[3]

In large cities the teachers of children had their schools near the city gates ; for instance, Sabhuya had his school by the city gate where he gave lessons to the children of noblemen and others.[4]

The following extracts from the Records of the Western World by a Chinese traveller shows the state of education since the days of the Buddha :

" To educate and encourage the young they are first taught to study the book of twelve chapters.

" After arriving at the age of seven years and upwards, the young are instructed in the five Vidyas, Sastras of great importance. The first is called the elucidation of sounds (*Sabdavidya*). This treatise explains and illustrates the agreement of words and it provides an index for derivatives.

" The second is called Kiau-ming (*Silpasthāna-vidyā*) ; it treats of the arts, mechanics, explains the principles of the Yin and Yang and the calendar.

" The third is called the medical treatise ; it embraces formulae for protection, secret charms, medical stones, acupuncture, and mugwort.

1. *Bhīmasena Jātaka*
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Bhadda Kundalakesa
3. *Katahāka Jātaka*
4. *Thera Gāthā*

"The fourth Vidyā is called the science of causes ; its name is derived from the character of the work, which relates to the determination of the true and the false, and reduced to their last terms the definition of right and wrong.

"The fifth Vidyā is called the science of "the interior" (*Adhyātma-vidyā*) ; it relates to the five vehicles, their causes and consequences, and the subtle influences of these.

"The teachers must themselves have closely studied the deep and secret principles they contain, and penetrated to their remotest meaning. They then explain their general sense, and guide their pupils in understanding the words which are difficult. They urge them on and skilfully conduct them. They add lustre to their poor knowledge and stimulate the desponding.

"For higher education youths went to reside with a teacher of 'great fame',[1] or of 'world-wide fame'.[2] They had to take the teachers' fees with them, which were given as 'the first offering to the guru'. Of such resident pupils some were free scholars 'who attended on their teacher by day, and at night they learn of him, but those who brought a fee are treated as his sons in his house."[3]

The poor students had at times to depend on public charity, for "in those days the people of Benares used to give day by day food and clothing to the poor lads and had them taught free."[4]

Although pupils from different classes of society resided with their teacher as comrades and friends, it was not uncommon for them to be rivals for the hand of the teacher's daughter, who often became the much coveted prize for scholarship and virtue of the pupil.[5]

The teachers with a great reputation were able to charge higher fees, for the rich parents tried to get their children taught by them. "A brahamin after perfecting his education at Takkasilā became a teacher of world-wide fame in Benares. To him flocked, as pupils, young nobles, and brahmins from all the royal and wealthy families."[6]

The question that was asked from a learned person was not what his university was, but who his teacher was.

Specialists in various branches of knowledge and in arts where practical skill was necessary took pupils as apprentices. In some cases knowledge was handed down secretly from teacher to pupil. This

1. *Kosiya Jātaka*
2. *Bhīmasena Jātaka*
3. *Tila Mutthi Jātaka*
4. *Losaka Jātaka*
5. *Silavimansana Jātaka*
6. *Kosiya Jātaka*

practice, though it made some type of knowledge the exclusive right of a chosen few, yet created an emotional reverence for the teacher by his pupils. Hence the teachers were held in great esteem and were honoured as one's own parents.

The duties of the pupils towards their teachers were, rising from their seats in salutation, waiting upon them being eager to learn, paying attention when they were taught and rendering personal service.

The duties of the teachers were to love their pupils, to find out what pupils did not know, to perfect the knowlege which they already possessed, not to hide knowledge from pupils, to praise their good qualities and to provide for their safety.[1]

Under strict discipline and personal guidance of a teacher, some pupils completed their education quicker than others. As a rule the preliminary education before a student began to specialise, had to be completed before sixteen years of age.

Prince Siddhārtha had received his education before he was sixteen. Another prince completed his education at the age of sixteen.[2] A brahamin of sixteen was well versed in the vedas.[3] When a youth of sixteen, versed in the vedas, was rebuked for interrupting the elders in a conversation without waiting for his turn, one of the elders remarked : "Do not rebuke him. He comes from good parents, is well-informed, a good speaker and a scholar who is quite able to hold his own in the discussion."[4]

The return of a child after his education was looked forward to with delight by his parents. "When Janasandha, the son of the King of Benares, came of age and returned from Takkasila where he had been educated in all accomplishments, the King gave a general pardon to all prisoners."[5]

The subjects for study varied according to the course followed by each pupil. Ancient Indian classics refer to well-educated persons as possessors of the eighteen accomplishments.[6] Also the epithet "master of the sixty-four arts and sciences" is not uncommon. (See Appendix).

The general subjects for study can be gathered from the description of learned men of those days : "Brahmaya was versed in all vedas, he was perfect in the ritual with the glosses thereon, in phonology and in etymology, with history as a fifth branch ; he knew exegesis and was

1. *Sigālōvāda Sutta*
2. *Mahā Sīlava Jātaka*
3. *Assalāyana Sutta*
4. *Canki Sutta*
5. *Janasanda Jātaka*
6. *Mahā Dhammapāla Jātaka*

learned in casuistry and in the signs that mark the superman. His pupil Uttara was likewise."[1]

There was a class of people known as "mathematicians".[2] Similarly there were specialists of particular talents, such as those skilled in the use of arms.[3] In a public controversy which then existed, each argued his favourite art as the greatest of arts. Some preferred skill in the management of elephants or of vehicles or of horses. Others favoured "skill in the manufacture of bows and sword-hilts, skill in conveyancing, in mathematics, in estimates, in engraving, in poetry, in casuistry, or in agriculture."[4]

Rhetoric and dialectics were taught as an art. An accomplished speaker was one who "has a fine voice, and his speech is polished, distinct, unfaltering and suited to express his meaning".[5] A good preacher was described as one who speaks but little or at length relevantly to an assembly, skilful to judge his preaching.[6] A masterpiece in oratory was known as a "lion roar". The great orators were called "lion roarers". Among the Buddha's disciples Pindola Bhāradvaja was the chief among the "lion roarers".[7]

Raha was pre-eminent among those who could make an impromptu speech.[8] Dhamma-Dinnā, the philosopher, was a great orator. She was the foremost among the sisters who could preach.[9] Sukkā became learned and proficient in the doctrine. She was a ready speaker and a great preacher who had a large following.[10] Nanduttarā who was learned in arts and sciences was also a renowned speaker. She toured India, defeating many a learned man in debate, until she was defeated by the Buddha's disciple, the Venerable Moggallāna.[11]

Bhadda Kunḍalakesa became a great debater and went about the country carrying the "branch of rose-apple tree" as a symbol of triumph, until the Buddha's disciple, the Venerable Sariputta, humbled her pride.[12] Saccaka and his four sisters were also well-known dialectitions and debaters.

It would be a long task to attempt to give a list of men and women who were reputed as orators. The public were able to appreciate and

1. *Brahmāyu Sutta*
2. *Ganaka Moggallāna Sutta*
3. *Ganaka Moggallāna Sutta*
4. *Udāna*—Nanda
5. *Canki Sutta*
6. *Anguttara Nikāya* II—XIV
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Pindōla Bhāradvāja
8. *Thera Gāthā*—Raha
9. *Theri Gāthā*—Dhamma Dinnā
10 *Theri Gāthā*—Sukkā
11. *Theri Gāthā*—Nanduttarā
12. *Theri Gāthā*—Bhadda Kunḍalakesa

enjoy a good debate.[1] The interest taken by the people in debates and public speaking had already made rhetoric and dialectics popular.[2]

The wandering teachers known as the Prabājikas were in some ways like the Greek sophists. The acquisition of knowledge and skill in arts ceased to be the objects of education with the introduction of new modes of life originated by the different teachers. The Buddha taught the importance of the culture of the mind. He and his followers had a following in every part of the country which they visited. The residences built for them in different places became seats of learning. Unlike the teachers who used to charge fees for instruction, the Buddhist cultural institutions were opened free for all willing students. Buddhism introduced a free general educational system to India. The success of the system was assured by the fact that the teachers did their work for the love of it and not for gain. Side by side rose up the monasteries or residences for women Buddhists who devoted themselves entirely to the new culture. Female education became as popular and equally general as the education of the males. Not only in India, but even in other countries where Buddhism was introduced, male and female education developed.

The method of the Buddhist teacher was the direct training of the pupil's mind and the development of his character. Correct thinking and right understanding were highly valued, it being the object of the teacher to bring out the highest powers latent in the individual so that he might attain to perfection and enlightenment. This system of training was known as the "eight-featured method of the cultured."[3]

Cultivation of the memory was an essential part of the education for it was considered the safest mode of carrying knowledge. Although there were books in form of manuscripts, yet the students preferred to trust to their memories and they were able to recite the very words of their teachers on any subject of importance. There were students who were able to recite all the teachings of the Buddha.[4]

With the spread of Buddhist culture, the tendency was to bring learning within the reach of all, irrespective of class or creed. Every residence of the Buddhist monks became not only a cultural centre, but a school, for in each residence there was a lecture hall for preaching to the public. The disciples of the Buddha readily instructed those who came to them and cleared their doubts and difficulties.

1. *Cula Saccaka Sutta*
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Punna
3. *Ariyō Aṭṭangikō Maggō*
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Suhemanta

The women disciples followed the same course as the men and made female education popular. The spread of education led to the establishment of Buddhist universities in countries into which Buddhism was introduced. The ancient university of Nālandā, with its lecture halls and large buildings, had ten thousand students residing there. Revenues of hundreds of villages were used to endow the university. Nālandā became the home of students, logicians, philosophers, poets and artists.

A Chinese pilgrim gives an account of a great statue of the Buddha at Nālandā. He also mentions that he found an artist painting a picture of Metteyya Buddha (the next Buddha).

Like Nālandā, many universities sprang up in different parts of India. The University of Vikramasilā on the Ganges was one of them. Other countries got teachers from the universities of great reputation. Into those seats of learning and culture, students flocked from China, Japan, Cambodia, Greece, Tibet, Ceylon, Burma, Siam and many other parts of the world.

The universities gradually lost their influence due to Hindu persecutions to disestablish Buddhism, and the ruthless intolerance of the invaders destroyed the institutions that once moulded character and regulated life in India.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

LITERATURE

THE EXISTENCE of literature in a community is the mark of the type of cultural progress in that community. The standard of literature is a reflection of the standard of culture. Before any kind of literature can be produced the art of expression has to be developed. In the Buddha's day, although great scholars depended on their memories, writing had also been used as a means of recording thought.

Letter-writing was well-known in ancient India. There are many references to the practice in the Buddhist scriptures. For instance, "Isidatta and Citta became friends through correspondence, although they had not met each other". Citta wrote to him about the excellence of the Buddha and sent to him an account of the Buddha's teaching.[1] The nobleman, Anātha Piṇḍika, had a merchant friend whom he knew through correspondence.[2] Letters used to be carried from one person to another by messengers. Birds were sometimes employed to carry letters.[3]

The use of writing in daily life must have been a recognised fact, for children used to be taught to write.

"A nobleman's son and a servant-girl's son were born on the same day in the nobleman's house. When the nobleman's son was being taught to write, the servant's son used to go with his master's tablets and so learned at the same time to write. When he grew up he was employed as a private secretary. He wrote a letter to a merchant friend of the nobleman, recommending himself. The letter was sealed with his mater's private seal."[4]

The employment of secretaries, scribes and clerks, shows the common use of writing. Owing to the pressure of work in the residence of the Buddha's disciples at Jetavana, a clerk was appointed to allot to citizens the various days for accepted invitations.[5]

The work of scribes or clerks was followed as a profession. The parents of a child in choosing an occupation for their son did not wish to train him as "a writer for writing would make his fingers sore".[6]

1. *Thera Gāthī*—Suhemanta.
2. *Akatannu Jātaka.*
3. *Kuntami Jātaka.*
4. *Kantahaka Jātaka.*
5. *Kundaka Kucchi Sinhava Jātaka.*
6. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.

A clerk must have had a great deal to do if it was generally believed that their fingers ached through work. There is also a reference to "young men who earned their living as clerks of the signet, of account computers and as estate agents."[1]

The writing was generally done on ola leaves, which, like papyrus, lasted for centuries, or on tablets or on metal plates. Royal proclamations and public edicts were inscribed on metal plates or on rocks, or on stone slabs or stone columns.[2]

The scriptures give clear evidence of the materials used for writing. In one place it is written, "I will compose a verse of poetry and write it on an ola leaf".[3] In another place we read, "The king sent him the life of the Buddha on a painted panel, and the conditioned genesis on a gold plate especially inscribed."[4]

Writing must have been long in use prior to the Buddhist era, for during the days of the Buddha there was literature. The Buddhist scriptures make reference to literature produced at seats of learning such as Takkasila.[5] Not only do the Buddhist scriptures make mention of books, but the scriptures themselves were written in the form of books, divided into chapters.

The following quotation from the Records of the Western World by a Chinese traveller shows that writing was popular when he visited India :

> "The letters of their alphabet were arranged by Brahmadeva and their forms have been handed down from the first till now. They are forty-seven in number . . . . Middle India preserves the original character of the language in its integrity. Here the pronunciation is soft and agreeable and like the language of the Devas. The pronunciation of the words is clear and pure and fit as a model for all men.
>
> "With respect to the record of events, each province has its own official for preserving them in writing. The record of these events in their full character is called Ni-lo-yi-cha. In these records are mentioned good and evil events with calamities and fortunate occurrences."

1. *Maha Duhhka Khandha Sutta.*
2. *Asoka Edicts.*
3. *Punna Nadi Jātaka.*
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Tissa.
5. *Sakka Panha Sutta.*

To written or memorised doctrines were glosses and commentaries. " Brahma ", for instance, " was well versed in all three vedas. He was accomplished in the ritual with glosses thereon in phonology and in etymology, with history as a fifth branch."[1]

It seems that even the ancient lawyers could not do without their books of reference, as suggested by the following passage :

" He caused a book of judgments to be written and said : 'By observing this book you should settle suits '."[2]

The development as well as the decay of a language takes place by certain marked stages. The language of the Buddha was Magadhi now known as Pali. Magadhi was often spoken of in the Buddhist writings as the first or the original language. At that time the language of the vedas had already become classical. Judging from the resemblance of words, there is good reason to believe Magadhi to be the language of the people of Magadha, i.e., " Magadesha Basha, Pali Basha " or the language of the Brahmas. Pali language is the original language. And "Sanskrit" is derived from it.[3] The development of the language can also be judged from the rules and set forms of composition both in prose and verse. In the study of the language it was considered essential to learn rhythm and metre, grammar, style, philology, analysis of words and the figures of speech.[4]

The various forms of composition used in the Buddhist scriptures are classified as " sermons in prose, sermons in prose and verse, expositions, hymns, solemn sayings, maxims, stories of re-births, accounts of the super-normal and long or short discourses.[5]

Poetry was much appreciated in those days. Versification had become popular and even fashionable. Its free use was the mark of culture and learning. On formal occasions questions used to be asked in verse to which a ready answer should also be given in verse. Distinguished persons were greeted and praised in songs often sung to music. Also, on festive occasions, or for the celebration of great events, special verses used to be composed. The high esteem in which poetry was held can be gathered from the controversy which arose as to which was the greatest of the arts, when some maintained that there was no art greater than poetry.[6]

---

1. *Brahmaya Sutta.* 2. *Tuṇḍila Jātaka.*
3. Oldenberg's *Pali Dictionary Introduction.*
4. *Chanda, Vyākarana, Jothis, Sikks, Niruthi* and *Alaṅkāra.*
5. *Aṅguttara* II, XIX Navāṅgas of the *Buddha Sasana.*
6. *Udāna*—Nanda.

Compositions of famous poets used to be learnt and sung or recited in public. It was not uncommon for a person to burst forth into songs of joy after a great achievement. For instance, there are the songs of the disciples of the Buddha, sung at the attainment of enlightenment.[1]

The lady Visaka expressed her joy in song, to the surprise of her children and grand-children, at the opening ceremony of Pubba Rama, the magnificent residence which she caused to be built for the Buddha and his disciples.[2]

Such songs, often in the form of ballads, were attempts at expressions of joy. They were used also to express the feeling of love, faith and sorrow. They serve as a mirror to life, wherein the sufferings involved in life and the deliverance from such sufferings, are shown. These songs are remarkable for their simplicity of style, spontaneity in diction and directness of appeal to the emotions. The metre was often selected to suit the theme. In most ballads there are refrains which are often repeated with variations. In the Buddhist scriptures themselves there are various types of metre which the poets have adopted to suit their themes. The ease with which the philosophic thought in Buddhism was versified was remarkable. The didactic element in poetry is prominent in the ethical part of the doctrine.

Indian didactic poetry was brought to perfection in the choice of words and thoughts in the telling couplets which are found scattered in the Buddhist scriptures. *Dhammapada* (the words of Truth) is a book of Buddha's maxims in verse.

The tragic element in the renunciation or in the emphasis given to the sorrows of life is relieved by the joy of enlightenment and the perfection of life which is free from all suffering.

The poet's imagination was not restricted to religion and philosophy alone. For the beauty of nature, or of the human form, or tender affections and emotions have not escaped his notice. Once a king advertised the beauty of his daughter by inviting the poets to sing of her beauty.[3]

The heights of poetic imagination can be judged from the accounts of the four who visited heaven and returned in their human form. Of these, three were kings, namely, Mapamandathu, Nimi and Sadhina. The best account of heaven is that given by the musician Guttila, after his performance amongst the gods and goddesses.

1. *Thera Gāthā* and *Theri Gāthā*.
2. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā.
3. *Mahā Umagga Jātaka*.

The intellectualism and rationalism of the Buddhists pervaded their literature. The poets who sang of the beauty of the human figure or of the pleasures of life rarely forgot to conclude their songs by showing the impermanency and the fickleness of human pleasures, thereby suggesting that what one should strive to enjoy is beauty and happiness of mind.

In the art of compressing their thoughts into a minimum of words, the Buddhist poets will have few rivals. This is only possible when a language is developed and when writing has become an art. The best examples of compressed style are evident in the maxims and couplets.[1] The masterly manner in which the " blessings or things worthy of being rejoiced at " are summarised in *Mahamangala Sutta* cannot fail to rouse the admiration of any lover of the compressed style.

The art of story-telling, both in prose and in verse, were well known in India during the days of the Buddha. The Buddhist writers developed that art and the standard to which it has been raised by them can be judged from the Jātaka stories.

Also, both in poetry and in prose, writers have not neglected poetic justice. The punishment of the villain and the triumph of the hero were looked upon as a part of a writer's duty. In this way, happy endings are given to stories, for even the innocent who suffers from the tyranny of the villain is born again in better conditions, while the villain is shown to suffer for his wrong deeds. Hence in Buddhist literature there are no tragic ends to stories.

An important evidence of the development of the language is the use of myths as such. During the days of the Buddha there were the traditional myths which the Buddhist writers made use of just as the modern writers in European literature make use of the ancient Greek or Roman myths. The myths about gods and supernatural beings were used by the Buddhist writers for ornament or other poetical devices, or even for humour.

Bright and cheerful are the characters and incidents connected with gods (devas) in Buddhist literature. Sakka was the King of the Gods. He could in a moment think of or see a thousand matters, hence he was called the " Thousand-eyed ". By his marriage with the Asura maiden Suja, he earned the name of Sujampathi. It was after the war between the Gods and the Asuras (a type of Titans) that Sakka came into power. To prevent the Asuras from coming back to heaven, Sakka set a five-fold

1. *Dhammapada.*

guard with serpents (nagas), vultures (gurulas), spirits (kumbhandas), goblins and the four great guardian gods of the four corners of the world.

On his triumphant return from that war, he built Vijäyanta, the palace of Victory, " which has a hundred towers, each with seven hundred high storeys, and in each storey there are seven hundred goddesses, each with seven attendants ".[1] The palaces in heaven were built by Visvakamma, the architect of the gods, who at Sakka's bidding came down to earth to erect special buildings.[2] Sakka presides at the assembly of the gods, which consists of thirty-three other gods. As the King of Gods sits on his throne in all his glory, the throne begins to get warm and uncomfortable whenever a good man is in trouble. So Sakka, taking the human form, comes down to earth in order to help the good or to save them from danger. When a royal musician, a good old man, was challenged by his pupil to a contest, thereby trying to deprive him of his service with the king, the old man in despair went into the wilderness ; Sakka appeared to him and promised help. At the contest Sakka, with a host of gods and goddesses was present and nine hundred of the goddesses danced to the music of the old musician and helped him to win the contest.[3]

At the request of the goddesses, the musician was subsequently taken alive to heaven by Matali, the divine chariotier, who drove the chariot to which was yoked a thousand milk-white horses.[4] There he played the 'vena' better than the celestial musician, Panchasika.[5]

The clever treatment of the myths about Sakka is evident from the manner in which the Buddhists represented the King of the Gods. He was considered inferior to the perfectly enlightened man. So we find Sakka worshipping the Buddha in the cave of Indra's sal-tree.[6] Also on the Buddha's visit to King Bimbisara at Rajagaha, Sakka assumed the appearance of a handsome young man and went in front of the procession singing the praise of the Buddha.[7] This clearly shows that at the time there was the custom of impersonating the ancient gods by people in fancy costume on such occasions as processions.

By the time of the Buddha, the "thrice eleven" gods, of whom eleven were of earth, sky and water, had become mythical or symbolical

1. *Cula Tauha Sankhaya Sutta.*
2. *Suruci Jātaka.*
3. *Guttila Jātaka.*
4. *Mahā Samaya Sutta.*
5. *Bilari Kosiya Jātaka.*
6. *Sakka Panna Sutta.*
7. *Vinaya* I (13).

characters. Yet at that time some people had faith in Indra, Agni, Varuna and the Sun Deity, so that offerings to them were not uncommon.

Buddha taught that the gods were mortal and subject to suffering. When Baka, the Brahma god, had erroneous notions of permanency and immortality, the Buddha helped the gods to change their views.[1] Also, the Buddha pointed out that according to the very teachings about gods, they were represented as not only having human frailties, but even as being debauched by pleasure, or in mind, or as unconscious beings.[2]

To many prevailing ideas at the time the Buddha gave new and original meanings. One of these was the extension of the conception of god (deva) to human beings of noble character and enlightenment. So, according to the Buddha, a "superman" is a god.[3] Just as the good and the virtuous were called gods, so the devil and the wicked were termed devils (yakkas).

Even some beings of other worlds are spoken of as gods, for instance, in one place we read "the gods of ten thousand spheres were gathered together."[4]

Among the mythical deities were the gods of fire, water, earth, air and clouds, and the Brahmas, the Ghandharvas and the Māras.[5]

The poets and the creators of myths had given names for the celestial abodes, of which there were six,[6] besides the Brahma worlds. Corresponding to the worlds of enjoyment there were the places of torture and suffering of which there were eight great ones.[7] In the heavens there were five trees of wonderful powers. One of them named Kalpavurkshaya yields whatever one wishes.

The descriptions of the worlds of torture are full of horrors. As in most myths, Avichi, hell was guarded by dogs. "Two dogs, Sabala and Sama, of enormous size, mighty and strong, bite with their iron teeth those who are driven hence.[8]

The devils were not confined to their own worlds. Some of them inhabited the earth. Mara, the Evil One, was represented as the mighty

---

1. *Sanyutta* VI—Brahma Sutta
2. *Brahmajāta Sutta.*
3. *Arahaṃ.*
4. *Sarabha Miga Jātaks.*
5. *Maha Sīhanāda Sutta.*
6. (*a*) *Chathurmahārāgika*, (*b*) *Thāvathinsaya*, (*c*) *Yāmaya*, (*d*) *Thusithaya*, (*e*) *Nirmānarathiya*, (*f*) *Paranirmitha-vasavarthiya.*
7. (*a*) *Sanjivaya*, (*b*) *Kalasuthraya*, (*c*) *Sanghathaya*, (*d*) *Thāpaya*, (*e*) *Prathapaya*, (*f*) *Rawravaya*, (*g*) *Maharawravaya*, (*h*) *Avichiya.*
8. *Maha-Marada Kassapa Jātaka.*

king and leader of the devils. He had his host of followers who could take monstrous forms and shapes to frighten folk from their good undertakings. They occasionally created showers of dreadful and noxious things to harm those who did not give in to them.

Mara came with his ten-fold army to prevent the Buddha from attaining to enlightenment. Among his army were those who had taken the form of Gods of Death, of devils, of great devils, of vultures, or serpents, of quadrupeds, of goblins, of human beings and of Titans.

The Buddha routed and overcame them with the aid of his one of the ten Sublime Virtues ; The ten Virtues are : Virtue of Benevolence ; Right Conduct ; Renunciation ; Virtue of Truth ; Wisdom ; Virtue of Strenuous Effort ; Patience ; Determination ; Universal Love ; and Virtue of Impartiality. The defeated Māra returned home dejected and disappointed, when his three beautiful daughters, the embodiment of sensual pleasure, tried in vain to conquer where their mighty father failed. The story of Māra is an excellent example of Buddhist allegory.

This blending of myths with personifications of abstract ideas has given a special charm to the ancient Indian literature. The use of other figures of speech as similies and metaphors, puns, allegories, parables and proverbs was current in Buddhist literature.

The figure of the chariot in the following passage is a typical example of a literary device :

"Thy body is called a chariot, swift and provided with the mind as a charioteer, having the abstinence from all injury as its axle, liberality as its covering, a careful walk with the feet as the circumference of the wheel, a careful handling with the hands as the side of the carriage, watchfulness over the belly is the name of the wheel, watchfulness over the tongue is the prevention of the wheel's rattling. Its parts are all complete through truthful speech, it is well fastened together by the absence of slander, its frame is all smooth with friendly words and joined well with well-measured speech ; well constructed with faith and the absence of coveteousness, with the respectful salutation of humility as the carriage-pole, with the shaft of gentleness and meekness, with the rope of self-restraint, according to the five moral precepts, and the key of absence of anger . . . . having humble speech as the thong, and with absence of vainglory as the yoke, with the cushion of unattached thoughts, following wisdom and free from lust,—let memory be thy goad, and the ready application

of firmness thy reins ; mind pursues the path of self-control with its steeds, all equally trained, desire and lust are an evil path, but self-control is the straight road. As the steed rushes along after forms and sounds and smells, intellect uses the scourge and the mind the charioteer."[1]

Buddhist writings are remarkable for the careful arrangement of thought, for the application of the logical methods, and the compression of thought. The repetitions that occur are for literary effect. In some places they are used as refrains to songs while in other places it is done for emphasis. The adaption of the language to express philosophy in verse is clever and is only possible where the philosopher had become the literary artist.

The charm of the descriptive passages in the scriptures is the vivid imagery created by them. The spirit that pervades the Buddhist scriptures makes the literature pure and inspiring.

---

1. *Mahā Nārada Kassapa Jātaka.*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

A high standard in fine arts signifies a high standard of culture. It is not possible to conceive of the existence of clever artists among people who are mentally not evolved enough to produce works of merit. The more uncultured a nation is the more crude is the mode of life of the people. The mode of life and the experiences gradually develop the aesthetic sense which ultimately finds its expression in art. Hence it can be concluded that the more cultured a nation is the more refined is its art. This conclusion is supported by facts which can be shown by a comparison of the art of different nations. Also in the same nation at different periods its literature and art have ups and downs according to the rise or fall of the culture of the people. The history of Indian art affords an excellent example to illustrate this fact. India in the days of the Buddha had talented artists, but with the deterioration of the people her beautiful art disappeared as in the case of ancient Greece.

Music

Music had been very popular in Buddhist India. It was practised both as an accomplishment and as a profession. The undue devotion to it engrossed the minds of most poeple that the Buddha had to make a precept for the members of his order to refrain from it. To the rich music was a fashionable luxury. They were sent to bed with music and were awakened by it. At their meals, or even when they travelled about they took their musicians to entertain them on the way. Music was rarely missed at festive occasions, at processions, at marriages and at funerals. It was also customary for the strangers who sought entertainment to inquire for the musicians and to pay to hear them.[1] Also, the public musical contests show the interest people had in music.

Certain passages in the scriptures show that the people's ears were trained to appreciate good music. In speaking of the music of the lyre it was said, " the sound of your strings so harmonise with that of your song, and the sound of your voice with that of the strings that your

1. *Guttila Jātaka.*

lyre does not too much colour your song, nor your song too much colour your play".[1] To tune an instrument before playing was the usual thing, for "when the strings were too much stretched or when they were loose, a stringed instrument was not to be played upon".[2] The high technical skill of those ancient musicians can be judged from the fact that in a musical contest the two contestants were able to produce the necessary tones from one string after breaking the other strings one by one.[3]

The popular instruments were vena (a stringed instrument), lute, flute, tabor, drum and conch. In orchestral and band music which was played on festive occasions and processions, there must have been other instruments. Both men and women had then taken up music as a profession. There were professional conchblowers[4] and drummers.[5] Music had been a chief source of pleasure to the rich so they employed well trained girls to play the vena, lute, tabor, drum and such instruments at their residences.[6]

Singing was even more popular than the music of the instruments. Expression of emotion was not its only use. Songs of praise had been sung on special occasions as coronations and weddings, funerals and important meetings.

DANCING.

Throughout the ages dancing was a popular art in India. Trained artists danced, sang or recited at public festivals.[7] Javelin dancers and acrobats amused the crowds.[8] Dancing for private entertainment was usually done on special carpets then known as "carpets for dancing".[9] It was customary for men and women to dance together.

In the principal cities at that time there were girls noted for their dancing, singing and playing on the vena. They gave performances for which they charged exorbitant prices. Public attention attracted by those young women was somewhat similar to that of modern film stars and actresses. Ambapali of Vesali was the most well known. She was "gifted with the highest beauty of complexion, well versed in dancing, singing and playing on the vena".[10] Through her the city of Vēsali is supposed to have become more and more flourishing. At Rajagaha the famous dancer and musician was Sālavati, who rivalled Ambapali both in beauty and in the practice of her art. Among the actors

1. *Sakka Pañha Sutta.*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga V.
3. *Guttila Jātaka.*
4. *Samkhaohamana Jātaka.*
5. *Bherivada Jātaka.*
6. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Vajji Putta.
8. *Dubbaca Jātaka.*
9. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga V.
10. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.

Tālaputa had won great renown. He came from an actor's family of Rajagaha. Through his early training he became very proficient in theatrical performances. "His fame went throughout the length and breadth of India. He was the leader of a company of actors which consisted of 500 women. With great splendour he displayed his dramatic skill."[1]

The absence of dramatic compositions makes it difficult to conceive the nature of the drama of the times. The few facts known about it are that at the theatrical performances there were dancing, music, singing and recitations, that the actors had special costumes and the stage which was carpeted and gorgeously decorated was in the centre of the audience.

Painting and Sculpture

In Buddhist India painting and sculpture were developed arts. The references to them in the Buddhist scriptures indicate that a high standard was reached by the ancient artists. Buddhist ruins and archaeological discoveries add more evidence to the references in scriptures. There had been a class of artists who copied the human figure with care and exactness. The artists' imagination had not failed to conceive and represent the perfect forms of beauty which when generally accepted became the standard of beauty. So we find in the scriptures instances where the figures of men and women were compared to statues of perfect form and figure. A young man was described to be "like a golden statue of exquisite workmanship".[2] King Kusa made a draped image of a princess which resembled her so much that her nurse mistook it to be the very princess.[3] Also, a Brahamin named Pippali Manawaka who later was known as Maha Kassapa, a disciple of the Buddha, made a gold statue which was the exact image of a beautiful maiden.[4] These references suggest that the artists' conceptions of beautiful figures had their living counterparts.

The Gandhara School of art shows that the ancient Indian sculptors like the Greeks had attempted to copy the human form closely. The resemblance between the two schools is so marked that some art critics believe that one school had influenced the other. If in language and philosophy the Greeks were influenced by the ancient Indians it is most probable that the ancient Indian art influenced the ancient Greek art.

---

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Tālaputta.
2. *Samiddhi Jātaka.*
3. *Kusa Jātaka.*
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Maha Kassapa.

Under Buddhist culture Indian painting, sculpture and architecture had attained to a height of excellence which Indian artists have not so far been able to surpass. The remains of Buddhist art at Ajanta and other ruins reveal to some extent the progress made by the artists. Their work shows them to have been talented men with a special training. Art was not the monopoly of the professional artist, for it was followed as an accomplishment in which even kings delighted to excel. King Kusa's statue of a princess was admired even by professional artists.[1] Some of the artists had their training in the Buddhist centres of learning or in the universities. A Chinese pilgrim recorded that when he visited the University of Nālanda he found a great statue of Avolō-kitesvara and an artist was painting a picture of Metteya, Buddha.[2]

Although artists work for centuries it is rarely that a masterpiece attracting universal admiration is produced. The accumulated effort of generations of progressive work give to the world a great work of exceptional merit. Then the following generations, lost in their admiration of it, keep on imitating the masterpiece. The Greeks, combining beauty and love, produced Venus and ever since the idea has not been better depicted by the subsequent imitators of the original work. The Buddhist artists represented peace and enlightenment in the statue of the Buddha. That conception has not been surpassed by any subsequent effort. The representation of a high abstract idea by a wonderful blending of the real and the symbol so that the effect of one is not lost by undue emphasis of the other, can only be made at a time when art has reached a very high standard.

The art of any period is to a large extent a true index to the culture of the times. Any one observing the ruins of once flourishing Buddhist art will not fail to appreciate the charm of the cultural splendour that pervaded the art of Buddhist India. With the decay of that culture, Indian art began to decline.

Painting was popular in ancient India. Mural paintings were a popular form of decorations, for walls used to be decorated with drawings and paintings. The Buddha advised his disciples not to have fantastic drawings and paintings of men and women on the walls of their bedrooms.[3] In Buddhist India pictures were valued not only as works

---

1. *Kusa Jātaka.*
2. The next Buddha.
3. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga VI.

of art but even as objects for enjoyment and inspiration. In the days of the Buddha. King Bimbisara sent to his friend, King Tissa at Roguva, "the life of the Buddha on a painted panel."[1]

Very little information is available about the technique of the painters. Scriptures allude to a "show piece" of the painters.[2] It was evidently a drawing to show the design and composition of a proposed painting. In a Sinhalese epic[3] the beautiful movements of the dancers are compared to the movements of the painter's hands, thereby suggesting the freedom and grace with which artists used to draw The high standard of their drawings can easily be detected in the powerful yet charming lines of the fresco paintings.

By the time of the Buddha some arts and crafts were pursued for earning a living and certain clans or families had specialised in them. There were the families of potters,[4] garland makers, goldsmiths, etc. Such craftsmen turned decoration into an art. Different household utensils and vases were decorated with designs and figures.[5] "There were painted circular linings to the bottoms of the bowls with painted figures scattered over them or painted with patches of colour.[6] Bowls used to be carved out of sandal wood.[6] There were bowls of gold and of silver, set with jewels, besides those made of beryl or of crystal or of copper.[6] Jewellery and especially the elaborate dresses of women show the developed state of applied arts and crafts.

Glimpses into the architecture of ancient India as given in the Buddhist scriptures display the same high standard reached by other allied arts. Palaces and mansions were built in pleasure gardens with shady trees. In those gardens there were stone benches round the tanks which had steps leading to them and which were surrounded by balustrades and railings.[7] Some palaces had seven storeys. Five-storeyed buildings had been common in the rich cities such as Sāvathi and Rājagaha. Large buildings had turrets and towers. Sometimes towers used to be built for ornament over gates or entrances to a palace or mansion. The gate towers of Jētavana (a residence of the Buddha) were built by Prince Jēta at a cost of ninety millions.[8]

It was not unusual to hear of buildings noted for their towers. There were the Ambala tower,[9] the Round tower[10] and the peaked-roof

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Tissa.
2. *Sanyutta* XII.
3. *Guttila Kāvya*.
4. *Kumbakāra Jātaka*.
5. *Kusa Jātaka*.
6. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga V.
7. *Indamasana*—Gotta Jātaka.
8. *Palayi-Jātaka*.
9. *Sunaka Jātaka*.
10. *Ghaṭa Jātaka*.

buildings.[1] Pubbārāma (the Eastern Mansion) built by the generous Lady Visākā for the Buddha and his disciples, was "a large storeyed building with a verandah to it, and it was supported on pillars with capitals of elephants' heads".[1] The pavilions attached to some houses had been gorgeously decorated even with jewels, and the jewelled pavilions often contained thrones or stately seats.[2] Here are two illustrative passages from the scriptures :

"It is just as if there were a palace, and in it a gabled pavilion, plastered within and without, sheltered from winds, complete with well barred doors and windows that fasten."[3]

"Just as in a gabled palace the gable is the roof-tie on high which knits the structure together."[4]

Construction of houses with projecting balconies was known to ancient architects.[5] Also porticoes were held as valued decorations to houses. The architects must have had a special training to be able to erect buildings to suit different purposes. There were assembly halls for meetings. Preaching halls had been erected for the Buddha and his disciples at great expense. To judge from the accounts of large audiences at special meetings some halls must have been enormous in size. Large halls had also been built for judicial[6] or for legislative purposes. The Mallas had assembled in their hall when Ananda went to announce to them the passing away of the Buddha. Also, the Lichavi princes were assembled in their hall to transact business of the State when Sachaka went to inform them of a debate to be held with the Buddha. In Kapilavastu the people were assembled to celebrate the wedding of Prince Nanda in the Coronation Hall where the Buddha met Nanda who forsook his bride to follow the Buddha.[7]

The monumental buildings formed a special type of architecture. It has been the custom to build huge cairns entombing the ashes of sages, kings and other people of importance. They were usually built in a public place. In all Buddhist countries the ancient structure was copied with little local alterations. These monuments are as a rule very high with a dome and a pinnacle tapering to the skies. It is undoubtedly an artistic development of the mound (tumulus) built as the tomb of the ancient heroes. Around the base of the monument were the decorative panels depicting the memorable incidents in the life

1. *Vinaya*—Chulla Vagga VI.
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Paccaya.
3. *Mahā Sīhanāda Sutta.*
4. *Kosambiya Sutta.*
5. *Ummadanti Jātaka.*
6. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka.*
7. *Jinarāja Vaṃsa.*

of the deceased.[1] Then the whole monument was surrounded by railings carved out of stones. At the four entrances to it there were ornamental porches of beautiful design and clever workmanship.[2]

The skill and the architectural design of ancient artists can be detected in the monasteries[3] and the Buddhist art galleries carved out of rocks. The following description of a tunnel may also show the talent of the ancient architects :

> " The entrance to the greater tunnel was in the city. It was provided with a door eighteen cubits high, fitted with machinery, so that one button being pressed all were closed up. On either side, the tunnel was built up with bricks and worked with stucco. It was roofed over with planks and smeared with cement and whitened. In all there were eighty great doors and sixty-four small doors, which by the pressure of one button closed, and by the pressure of one button opened. On either side there were some hundreds of lamp-cells also fitted with machinery, so that when one was opened all opened, and when one was shut all were shut . . . . The great tunnel and the little tunnel and the city were finished in four months . . . . They opened the door of the tunnel and all the tunnel shone in a blaze of light like the decorated hall of the gods ".[4]

This passage has given rise to a theory that electricity was known and used in ancient India.

---

1 *Amarāvathi Dāgoba.*
2. *Sāñci Stūpa.*
3. *Vihāra.*
4. *Mahā Umagga Jātaka.*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ART AND SCIENCE

IN THE days of the Buddha mathematics was an applied science. Its development can be inferred from the architectural remains whose construction necessitated a knowledge of mathematics. The evidence from the scriptures is not less convincing. In a dispute which arose as to which is the greatest of applied sciences, " some said it was the knowledge of mathematics, of making estimates, of engraving, of writing poetry, etc ".[1] A few examples will be sufficient to get an idea of the development of numbers. For instance, Visaka's dress was estimated at ninety million gold coins.[2] The gate towers of Jetavana were built at a cost of ninety millions.[3] The world periods consist of the Mahakalpa six lakhs forty-thousand billions, the Asankya Kalpa sixty-four thousand billions and the Anthrakkalpa hundred billions.[4] Also the conception of infinity was popularly known. The Buddha described the different world systems and also the different forms of life as infinitely large.

In those ancient days knowledge was sought not for its own sake but for its practical use or application. Hence, there were more arts than sciences. Agriculture with an elaborate system of irrigation had been carried on as an art. Navigation was studied with care. A master mariner was described as having " a complete mastery over the art of seamanship. With him abroad no ship ever came to harm."[5]

Archery and the management of horses and of elephants were the occupations of experts. Of such arts there were eighteen, and also there were eighteen sciences or branches of knowledge. The mental culture taught in Buddhist psychology was an art or practice rather than a mere theory. The special psychic powers to be achieved were clairvoyance, clair-audience, performance of supernormal acts, knowledge of others' minds, memories of past lives and freedom from illusions.[6]

1. *Udāna*—Nanda.
2. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā.
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Pālayi.
4. "It is not easy to reckon how long an aeon is by saying so many years, so many centuries, so many thousand centuries."—*Saṅyutta Nikāya—Nidāna Vagga.*
5. *Supparaka Jātaka.*
6. *Iddhi Bala.*

Medical science had throughout the ages a practical basis. Along with it had developed surgery. Royal Physician Jivaka was the best of the Surgeons, who operates the brains and the heart and intestines. The common types of disease, in the days of the Buddha, had been leprosy, boils, dry leprosy, consumption and fits.[1] There were nursing homes[2] and as a result of Buddhist influence hospitals were built even for animals.[3] Surgeons, oculists and doctors for children were not uncommon.[4]

Jīvaka, a contemporary of the Buddha, has been known as the cleverest surgeon and physician. He had to complain of his heavy work in attending to a large number of patients.[5] He was the pupil of a " world renowned physician ". When he had spent seven years with the teacher, Jīvaka thought, " I learn much and learn easily, and I understand well and do not forget what I have learnt. I have studied now seven years, and I do not see the end of this art. When shall I see the end of this art ?"[6] This doctor cured a chronic headache of a noble lady at Saketa by administering some medicine through the nose. At Rājagaha he performed an operation on the head of a patient who was given up as incurable. " Jīvaka ordered him to lie down on his bed, tied him fast to his bed, cut through the skin of the head, drew apart the flesh on each side of the incision, pulled two germs out. He closed up the sides of the wound. Stitched up the skin on the head and anointed it with salve. He was cured within twenty-one days".[6] Another of his surgical feats was the operation on the son of a nobleman at Benares, " who used to amuse himself by ' turning over and over ' ". That brought upon himself an entanglement of his intestines, in consequence of which he could not digest his food. He grew lean, disfigured and discoloured. Having examined him Jīvaka cut through the skin of the belly, drew the twisted intestines out, disentangled and put them back. Then he stitched the skin together, and annointed it with salve. Before long the patient gained his health.[6] Many are the recorded surgical operations and cures done by Jīvaka.

The use of remedies for animals had found work for veterinary surgeons and physicians. There were doctors who treated elephants.[7]

The use of herbs for medicine was common. A famous physician wishing to test his pupil's skill once asked him to find out about Takka-

1. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
2. *Thera Gāthā*.
3. Asoka Inscriptions and *Mahāvaṃsa*.
4. *Brahmajāla Sutta*.
5. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
6. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
7. *Kaka Jātaka*.

sila any plant or herb which is not used for some medical purpose.[1] The pupil found every plant he came across to be useful. Of medical value were fats of bears, of fish, of alligators, of swine and of asses.[2] Also, various oils, ointments and perfumes had been used. Oil was a common purgative.[3] Of salts the most useful for medicine were "sea-salt, black-salt, rock-salt, kitchen salt and red-salt".[4] Administering emetics or purgatives was known. Some ancient medicines ordinarily used are worth mentioning.

Hot baths, use of steam baths and baths in which medicinal herbs had been steeped were prescribed for rheumatism.

Letting of blood was a cure for intermittent ague.

For constipation a decoction was made of ashes of roasted rice. The remedy for wind in the stomach or for sickness was sour gruel with salt.

For fever a drink was made of edible stalks of the lotus. To relieve headache medicine was given to make people sneeze. Anointing with perfumes was a remedy for skin diseases.

Cow's urine was used for jaundice.

For snakes bites dung urine ashes and clay were applied.

Drugs and decoctions made of herbs and roots were given for many ailments. They were administered for causing virility or impotency. Drugs and oils used to be administered through the nose. Oiling ears or dropping medical oils or applying collyrium or medical ointment to the eyes was common. There were medical practitioners as oculists, surgeons and doctors for children.[5]

1. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VI.
3. *Mamsa Jātaka*.
4. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VI.
5. *Brahamajāla Sutta*.

PHILOSOPHY

IN INDIA before the Buddha the chief philosophical thought was embodied in the Vedas which were interpreted and preserved by men of learning. The scholar or the teacher in those days was often described as " learned in the Vedas ". The philosophical speculators had already begun to form various theories on diverse matters. Hence different schools of thought, each with a teacher and his followers, had sprung up, among whom there was a class of philosophers known as " the wandering teachers."[1]

Once during the rainy season when the Buddha was at Rājagaha the well-known philosophers of the time had met in the discussion hall at " Wanderers' Pleasaunce ". Among them were : Purāna Kāssapa, Makkhalī Gosāla, Ajita Kesa Kambali, Pakudha Kaccayana, Sanjaya the son of Belattji, Nātaputta and Nigantha. Each of them was a propounder of a doctrine.

Purāna Kāssapa, was the head of an Order well known and of repute as a Sophist, revered by the people, a man of experience and well advanced in years. He taught that to him who kills, commits dacoity, or robbery, or adultery, there is no guilt. In generosity, in self-mastery, in control of the senses, in speaking truth there is neither merit nor increase of merit.[2]

Makkhali of the Cowpen, declared there was no cause either ultimate or remote for people becoming depraved or virtuous. They become so without reason and without cause.[2]

Agita of the garment of hair, taught that there was no use in giving alms or making offerings and sacrifice for there was no result of good or evil deeds. A human being was composed of four elements and when he died the earthly parts returned to earth, the fluid to water, the heat to the fire, the wind to the air, and his faculties pass into space.[2]

Pakudha Kaccayana said that the four elements, earth, water, fire and air—ease pain and soul, were neither created nor caused to be created. They do not move and do not vary. No one could deprive

1. *Prabajikas.* 2. *Samana-phala Sutta.*

anyone of life. When a head is cut off with a sharp sword, the sword has only penetrated into the interval between seven elementary substances.[1]

Nigantha of the Nātha clan had a doctrine of a four-fold restraint as regards all evil. He taught his disciples to live contented with the sense of having restrained evil.[2] Bodily action taken to be the principle action and that of the mind and speech to be secondary.

Sanjaya of the Belattha clan said that there neither was nor was not another world.[1]

The theories put forward by the ancient philosophers about the soul and the world are that the soul and the world are eternal, that they are not eternal, they are both eternal and not eternal, they have a special purpose, they have no special purpose, they are purposeless, they have one form of consciousness, they have many forms of consciousness, they have limited consciousness, their consciousness is not limited, they are pleasant, they are not pleasant, they are both pleasant and unpleasant, and they are neither pleasant nor unpleasant.[2] Of these theorists some were eternalists.

Eternalists affirmed that the soul is eternal and the world creating nothing new is firm as the mountain or the pillar firmly fixed. Though the living creatures transmigrate and die, and though they change from one existence to another yet they are eternal. There were other eternalists who thought that there were previous existences extending through long periods of ten or more world aeons. Another class of eternalists held that only some things are eternal. According to them world systems pass away. When that happened beings had mostly been born in the World of Light. There they lived feeding on joy, radiating light, moving through the air continuing in glory. When this world-system begins to evolve again, the palace of Brahma appears. Then those in the World of Light come to life in the Palace of Brahma. They form the beginning of a fresh world-system.[3]

Semi-eternalists maintained that the soul and the world are partly eternal and partly not.[3]

Extensionists (*Antanantika*) were divided in their views about the world. It was held to be finite by some, or infinite by some. Some declared the world to be limited upwards and downwards but infinite across, while others taught the world to be neither finite nor infinite.[3]

1. *Samañña-phala Sutta.*
2. *Panca-Haya Sutta.*
3. *Brahmajāla Sutta.*

Equivocators said that they neither knew the good nor the evil as it really is, and that there was neither another world nor is not.[1]

Originalists maintained that the soul and the world originated without a cause. According to them the soul and the world are fortitous in origin.[1]

Another set of thinkers held that the soul after death is unconscious and not subject to decay. They said that the soul had form, is formless, has and has not form, neither has nor has not form, is finite, is infinite, is both finite and infinite and is neither finite nor infinite.[1]

More conflicting views had arisen about the soul, so that it was held to be eternal, not eternal, neither eternal nor non-eternal, both eternal and non-eternal, self-made, made by another, and not self-made and not made by another.[2]

These soul theories were exploded by the Buddha enquiring "What is soul?" While the other thinkers assumed there is a soul and based their theories on that assumption, the Buddha questioned the assumption itself; and pointed out that when the conception of the soul was critically examined there was nothing in the individual mind or in the body or in both to correspond to a soul, and that the individual himself could not be the soul as he was constantly changing both physically and mentally. To the Buddhist an individual is the combination of body, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness—the five skandhas. Seeing life as a continual process governed by its own activities the Buddha taught it to be soulless and subjected to change and suffering. The Buddha denied the existence of a soul but taught that the activities of living beings at their death leave a residuary and reactionary force which determines the next existence. This force which is not static is termed *Kamma*. The process of life is continual until it is stopped by the attainment of enlightenment, i.e., Nibbàna.

India at that time had a large number of thinkers and speculators on various subjects. Not only their numbers but the subjects of their speculations should show the standard of social progress. There were eternalists who proclaimed both the soul and the world are eternal. Of them some were eternalists with regard to some things, and in regard to others they were non-eternalists. There were the theorists on the finiteness or the infiniteness of the world. The equivocators argued that "there is not another world, that there both is and is not another world, and that there neither is, nor is not another world".

1. *Brahmajāла Sutta.* 2. *Pasadika Sutta.*

Speculators on the future existence asserted that the soul after death was conscious or that the soul after death is neither conscious nor unconsciousness or that there was neither conscious or unconscious existence after death. Opposed to the annihilists were the teachers of material happiness in this life. There were also theorists concerning the future and those who reconstruct the past and arrange the future.[1] The realists declared that everything is, while the delusionists contended that everything was delusion and that nothing is. The Buddha taught both to be extreme views and therefore untrue.[2] The metaphysician attempted to explain the nature of fire, water, earth and air, while the psychists attempted to explain perceptions, feelings, sensations and consciousness. There were theorists about realms of infinite space, of infinite mind, of infinite naught, and realms of neither perception nor non-perception. The "mathematicians" had their philosophy of unity, plurality and universality.[3]

The Buddha appearing in the midst of this turmoil of speculations and theories, criticised them and was able to correct and direct them in the right view by a method of analysis and reason. Buddhist philosophy may roughly be divided into logic, ethics, psychology of the mind and matter, of the philosophy of causation and relative conditions.

Seeing the attachment people paid to authority of the tradition and teacher, the Buddha introduced the scientific method by insisting on the examination of cause and effect in explanations of phenomena. Reasoning was based on subjective experience rather than on objective authority. Hence he advocated the freedom of thought as the basis of rational thinking when he taught : "Accept not on hearsay, nor by tradition, nor by what people say ; accept not because it is in the scriptures by mere rhetoric, nor by inference, nor by consideration of appearances, nor because it accords with your view, nor because you think it might be right out of respect for a teacher ; but accept if at any time you know of yourself".[4] The methods of reasoning are dealt with in detail in Buddhist logic. Reasoning in terms of cause and effect is a fundamental feature of Buddhist philosophy. There is the well known chain of Causation : Ignorance of not knowing and discerning the Four Noble Truths is the cause of formation of arising and passing away phenomena ; formation is the cause of consciousness ; Consciousness at birth is the cause of mind and body ; mind and body are the causes of six senses ; six senses are the cause of contact ; contact is

1. *Brahmajāla Sutta.*
2. *Saṅyutta Nikāya* Ch. XII.
3. *Brahmajāla Sutta.*
4. *Kālāma Sutta*—Aṅguttara Nikāya II, XX.

the cause of feeling ; feeling the cause of craving ; craving is the cause of grasping ; grasping is the cause of becoming ; becoming is the cause of birth ; birth is the cause of old age, death, misery, lamentation, pain, displeasure and despair.

The Buddha discarding theological explanations of life gave a rational one. The life of the individual was analysed into body and mind, the mind being taken as consisting of perceptions, feelings, volition and consciousness. Life is characterised by impermanency, suffering and soullessness. The force behind life is its own activities which react on the individual thereby making him suffer or enjoy according to his own actions. Hence come the differences in people. What one has done in a previous life manifests itself together with what he does in a subsequent life. So the sufferings or joys in human beings are not due to gods or devils, but to their own activities both in the past and in this life. People are naturally influenced by their cravings, passions and ignorance. These ills cause suffering. To avoid suffering and to perfect oneself becomes the purpose of life. Buddhist ethics are based upon these data.

Since the sufferings are caused by cravings, passions and ignorance, the way to remove suffering is by destroying the cravings, passions and ignorance by the practice of benevolence, right conduct and right concentration on things-as-they-are.

There are thirty-seven constituents of enlightenment, when morality is purified and viewed straight, then supported by right action, right mode of life, right effort, right meditation, and right concentration.

The standard of right and wrong in Buddhist ethics depends upon the ideal of life as perfection and enlightenment. All actions which help the individual towards that ideal are considered meritorious and good, while all actions which obstruct mental perfection and enlightenment are demerits and therefore wrong.

The Buddhist community is divided into two groups according to the mode of life people prefer to lead. Those who prefer to lead the higher life renouncing the cares and miseries of the home life thereby becoming homeless and devoting their time and attention to the practice and the teaching of the method to perfection and enlightenment. The rest are the laymen or the worldly minded. Each group is to some extent dependent on the other, and each has its own obligations and duties, and a moral code of its own.[1]

1. *Vinaya Piṭaka* and *Gihi Vinaya*.

Admission to the order takes place in the open assembly of monks (Bikkhus). Persons seeking admission must be free from tumour, white leprosy, phthisis, epilepsy. He must be a freeman and not a royal servant. He must also be free from debt. His parents' permission is necessary. He must be above twenty years of age.

The Novices observe ten precepts, viz. :

To refrain from taking life, from taking what is not given, from incontinence, falsehood, strong drink and intoxicants, from untimely, food, from dancing, singing, music and seeing shows, the use of garlands scents and unguents, high or large luxurious beds, and to refrain from accepting gold or silver.[1]

The precepts for the laity are five, viz. :

To refrain from taking life, from stealing, from unlawful pleasures from falsehood and from intoxicants.

The four grave acts of demerit for a Buddhist are to cause a wound and bleed the Buddha, to kill an enlightened person (Arahat), to kill father or mother, or to bring about a schism of the Order. Regarding this last demerit there is an inscription on the Sanchi Pillar by Emperor Asoka :

> "The Sangha of monks and of nuns has been made whole and entire, my sons and grandsons (continuing as long as the sun and moon endure). Whosoever breaks the Sangha, be he a monk or a nun shall be clad in white raiment and compelled to live in what is not a residence (of the monks). For my desire is—what is it ?—that the Sangha may remain whole and entire and may be of long duration."

Religious dogmas and superstitious rites and practices were dispensed with. According to the Buddha's teaching, "neither the flesh nor fish, nor fasting, nor nakedness, nor tonsure, nor matter hair, nor dirt, nor rought skins, nor worshipping of the fire, nor the many penances, nor prayers, nor oblations, nor sacrifices, nor observance of seasons, purify a mortal who has not conquered his doubt."[2]

The Buddhist rationalism began to influence the social institutions, education, art, literature, government and the customs of India. In addition a deep rooted humanitarian movement arose through the Buddhist practice of "universal-love, compassion, appreciation and equanimity"[3] towards all beings. The outcome of this was the love of peace and the unwillingness to harm others.

---

1. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.
2. *Āmaganda Sutta.*
3. *Mettā, Karunā. Muditā, Upekshā.*

In Buddhist ethics, as mentioned above, the root cause of human ills is due to ignorance and craving. The real happiness is to be achieved through the development of the mind. Therefore mental culture is of paramount importance. This produced a practical psychology which is remarkable not only for its minute examination of the working of the mind and of the nature of consciousness but for revealing the supernormal powers of the mind such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, performance of supernormal acts, knowledge of other minds, memories of past existences, and freedom from illusions.[1]

Two of the references to ancient Indian philosophers in Greek writings are noteworthy.

"Megasthenēs, the author of a work on India, who lived with Seleukos Nikator, writes most clearly on this point, and his words are these :— "All that has been said regarding nature by the ancients is asserted also by philosophers out of Greece, on the one part in India by the Brachmanes and on the other in Syria by the people called the Jews."

There are two sects of these Indian philosophers : one called the Sarmani and the other the Brachmanai. Connected with the Sarmanai are the philosophers called the Hylobioi who neither live in cities nor even in houses. They clothe themselves with the bark of trees and subsist upon acorns and drink water by lifting it to their mouth with their hands. They neither marry nor beget children.

1. *Abhinnas.*

SOCIAL SERVICE

HELPING THE poor and the weak is a human instinct. Under Buddhist influence it became a fundamental principle in social life to look after the poor ; for according to Buddhism helping the poor and the needy was considered not merely a social duty but an act of merit. Buddhists' acts of charity range from the slightest act of kindness to the giving of the greatest gift—"the gift of truth".[1] "Remove selfish cravings" and "be unselfish" for cravings and selfishness cause suffering, are words of warning repeated again and again in the scriptures. This spirit of service to others made Buddhists very generous and hospitable. Even today the Buddhist countries are noted for their hospitality. One noteworthy feature of Buddhist sense of service to others is that they consider the person as a sufferer and in need of help.

From the pre-Buddhistic ages teachers and their followers used to be invited for banquets by their admirers. At those banquets they often explained their teachings. It was usual to build residences and preaching halls for the teachers. The custom was continued when the Buddha and his disciples travelled from one part of the country to another teaching the people. As long as the unselfish followers of the Buddha taught the ignorant for no reward or profit the public were willing to look to their immediate necessaries of life.

Buddhist missions were started during the life time of the Buddha, for he said : "Go ye Bhikkhus and wander forth, for the gain of the many ; for the welfare of the many ; in compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of gods and men, proclaim the doctrine."[2]

Buddhism seems to be the earliest missionary "religion" on record Two and a half centuries after the Buddha, Emperor Asoka reminded his subjects not to forget the Buddhist duty ; for he proclaimed : "There is no higher duty than the welfare of the world".[3] The Emperor's son and daughter renounced their royal pleasures to become missionaries and left India to help the less fortunate countries.[4]

1. *Dhammapada*.
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.
3. Rock Edict VI.
4. *Mahāvaṃsa*.

The spirit of generosity and charity of the Buddha's times can be judged from a few anecdotes. Yasa, one of the richest young men of Sāvasti, gave up all his wealth and joined the Buddha's order. Anāthapindika, a multi-millionaire, became poor by spending all his wealth for the cause he espoused. Lady Visākā's generosity has become classical. Once a poor old woman of Sāvasti was anxious to invite a disciple of the Buddha for a meal. In her enthusiasm she made the invitation which was accepted by Sāriputta, one of the chief disciples of the Buddha. When the guest came the poor woman found that she had not been able to get anything for him. The news soon spread throughout the city. Amongst those who heard it was King Pasenadi. He at once sent her food of all sorts together with a garment and a purse of 1,000 "pieces of gold". Others sent her 100 or 200 according to their means. On that day the woman got 100,000 gold coins.[1]

What young Visākā did with her wedding presents is also noteworthy. She, being the daughter of one of the richest noblemen, was the recipient of presents from people of all ranks of life, including the king. She gave away those presents to the poor families of the city.[2]

Marriages, births and deaths were some of the special occasions for giving alms. A nobleman's son, inheriting the estate at his father's death, ordered to hold a ceremonial alms-giving and a great assembly gathered together.[3]

In some cities special halls had been built to provide food and other necessaries of life to the poor. At Benares on one occasion a rich man "built six halls of Bounty, one at each of the four gates, one in the middle of the city and one before the palace. In them every day he distributed in gifts 600,000 gold coins".[4] Other towns had set up similar institutions. "There stood at that time three-fourths of a league from Jētavana a market town where a great deal of rice was distributed by ticket and special meals were given free".[5] Some families had established almonries and had kept them on for generations.[6] There were also "rest houses" built near great cities where travellers or strangers to the city could take their lodgings,[7] for instance at Benares "there was a residence outside the city in which the wayfarers lodged when they came late to the city.[8]

Among the social services can be reckoned the establishment of infirmaries and hospitals. In describing a visit of Sāriputta, the great

1. *Kundaka-Kucchi Sindhava Sutta.*
2. Visākā—*Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā.*
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Paccaya.
4. *Cūla Paduma Jātaka.*
5. *Gutha Pana Jātaka.*
6. *Illisa Jātaka.*
7. *Sunaka Jātaka.*
8. *Gagga Jātaka.*

disciple of the Buddha, to a hospital, the scriptures say : " When he was in the hospital, Sāriputta went on his round of inquiry, asking after this and that sick Bhikkhu ".[1] Emperor Asoka in one of his edicts declared that hospitals were established in all parts of his kingdom.

" Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsin (Asoka) as well as in those of the frontier sovereigns, are established hospitals for men and animals."[2]

Also in other Buddhist countries as Ceylon there were hospitals for men and animals.[3] Kindness to animals had been a special feature of Buddhist culture. Emperor Asoka by law protected the lives of animals.[4]

The same Emperor also did many acts of public service which were subsequently copied by other countries. In one edict we find, " I have grown mango orchards. I have caused wells to be dug at every eight 'koses'. I have had rest-houses made. I have made many waiting sheds at different places for the enjoyment of man and beast."[5]

---

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Samitigutta.
2. Rock Edict II.
3. *Mahāvaṃsa*.
4. Rock Edict I.
5. Rock Edict VII.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

TOWNS AND VILLAGES

In the days of the Buddha a great part of India extending from the Ganges Valley was a network of cities and villages connected with one another by roads. Taking the Bodhi-tree, the spot where the Buddha attained enlightenment, as the centre, the great cities of India were described as six on the east, eight on the north, seven on the south and seven on the west.[1] There were the smaller towns and villages which arose with growing population. Most of the ancient cities did not originate with a number of people forced by circumstances to live in particular spots, but they were methodically planned and built. So the site selected depended on the purpose for which the city was built, either as the capital of a kingdom or as a centre for commerce. The cities derived their names either from their founders or from some other incident. Each city had its ramparts with four gates. At the gates were large pillars surrounded by rows of palm trees.[1] The gates themselves bore names either according to the direction in which they lie or commemorating a memorable event connected with the city. We hear of the "Southern Gate" or the "Eastern Gate" of Sāvasti. In a newly built city, the gate through which the Buddha went out was named the "Gotama Gate."[2] There were towers[3] over the city gates which used to be locked at night.[4] When the gates were closed there was outside the city a building for the use of the strangers who came late.[5] To avoid the noises and the disturbances of the city, schools and seats for concentrated thought and meditation used to be built in the suburbs. The schools in some cities were near the city gates[6] and the residences for the Buddha and his disciples were built not far from Sāvasti.[7] The race-course, the parade grounds for soldiers, and the cemetery were outside the city. Within the city are the principal roads leading to the gates ; and the minor roads mark out the various sections such as the palace, and the residential quarters of the nobles, the "Hall of Justice" and the hall for legislature, which were usually

1. *Mahā Sudassana Sutta.*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VI.
3. *Palayi Jātaka.*
4. *Alina Citta Jātaka.*
5. *Gagga Jātaka.*
6. *Thera Gāthā*—Sabhiya.
7. Jētavanārāma and Pūrvārāma.

near the palace, the quarter of the bankers and the centre of commerce, the homes of the workmen and the barracks of the soldiers. The towered and storied buildings, the pavilions, the public parks, squares, groves and tanks, made those ancient cities picturesque.

Parks and pleasure gardens had been attached to the palaces of the royalty, or the mansions of the nobility and the rich. Some of the parks or pleasure gardens well known in the Buddhist scriptures are the "Old Pleasaunce",[1] the Mango Grove,[2] the Grove of Tranquility,[3] the Banyan Park,[4] the Bamboo Grove where squirrels are fed,[5] the Wanderers' Pleasaunce, where peacocks are fed,[6] Anāthapindika's Pleasaunce,[7] and Ambapāli's Grove.[8] These parks, though situated in or about cities, possessed places for solitude and rest. In a park a king once "observed delightful and attractive nooks at the foot of the trees, peaceful and quiet, sheltered from winds, the very haunts of solitude and seats for meditation."[9]

The public parks and pleasaunces were the scenes of national festivals, the haunts for pleasure-seekers and the places for public gatherings.

The parks and cities also had their tanks with lilies and lotuses growing in them. There was a tank in the city of Vesāli out of which the royal families got water for ceremonial sprinkling.[10] Like the parks the tanks had their caretakers. The Lotus tank in Benares was looked after by a watcher.[11] From the following description a general idea of the city tanks may be gathered :

"The Lotus tanks between the palm trees were at distances of 100 bow-lengths. Each had four flights of steps with balustrades of silver, with double railing with cross-bars and capitals. In the ponds were planted blue water-lilies, white water-lilies and lotuses. People used to bathe in those ponds."[12]

As for the buildings of the city, the private houses where the nobles or the rich dwelt had five or seven storeys. The scriptures even make mention of nine-storeyed buildings. The houses with their high pillars and porticoes and turrets with decorated tops must have been the pride of cities. Attached to the buildings or in parks highly ornamental

1. *Bahitika Sutta.*
2. *Theri Gāthā*—Subhā.
3. *Ghotamukha Sutta.*
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Godhika.
5. *Cula Sakuludayi Sutta.*
6. *Maha Sakuludayi Sutta.*
7. *Angulimāla Sutta.*
8. *Mahā Pari Nibbāna Sutta.*
9. *Bahitika Sutta.*
10. *Bhadda-Sāla Jātaka.*
11. *Paduma Jātaka.*
12. *Maha Sudassana Sutta.*

pavilions used to be built. They were described as "the jewelled pavilions ".[1] Some such pavilions were made of sandal wood.[2]

Each city had its assembly houses for legislative and administrative purposes.[3] There were also the guild houses.[4] Some halls were used for social gatherings and others as lecture halls. "The hall put up in Queen Mallika's Park for the discussion of systems of philosophy—the hall set round with a row of "tinduka trees "—was known by the name of "the Hall".[5] There were also the Mote Hall of the Mallas,[6] the Buck Hall,[7] the Coronation Hall of Kapilavasthu,[8] and the Gabled Hall at Vesāli.[9] Some rest-houses of cities were termed "the Royal Resting Houses",[10] evidently because they were established and maintained by kings for the use of the public. Some large buildings were built to serve a number of purposes. A building was so arranged that there was in one part accommodation for ordinary strangers, in another a lodging for the destitute. One section of it was for the lying-in of destitute women, another part had lodgings for stranger Bhikkhus and Brahamins. Also there was lodging for other sorts of men. A special section was set apart for foreign merchants to stow their goods. A part of the same building was used for sports. Also, some sections of the building were used as a Court of Justice and as a hall for religious assemblies.[11]

This passage suggests the nature and uses of some large buildings in those days. There were occasions when spacious buildings had to be erected for public shows. "A wrestling ring was erected in front of a palace gate ".[12] Similarly a large pavilion was caused to be made for a public musical contest.[13]

A prominent place of the city such as the junction of chief roads contained the memorials built enshrining the remains of great kings or teachers.[14] The main roads connected one city with another. The construction of bridges was known at that time. The principal streets of cities must have been sufflciently wide and strongly made for the traffic of chariots, carriages, elephants and horses. It was through the main streets that large processions and triumphal marches of kings or great teachers passed.

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Paccaya.
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Isidinna.
3. *Sangiti Sutta.*
4. *Jātaka* IV, 27.
5. *Potthapada Sutta.*
6. *Saṅgiti Sutta.*
7. *Mahā Pari Nibbāna Sutta.*
8. *Thera Gāthā*—Nanda.
9. *Cūta Saccaka Sutta.*
10. *Mahā Maṅgala Jātaka.*
11. *Maha Umagga Jātaka.*
12. *Ghaṭa Jātaka.*
13. *Guttila Jātaka.*
14. *Maha Parinibbāna Sutta.*

On a festival day the king would cause the city to be decorated like "the city of gods". He would mount on the elephant in all its trappings and make solemn procession round the city attended by a great retinue.[1] Though on State occasions kings rode on elephants, at other times they used other modes of conveyance to suit the circumstances. "King Videha drove in a magnificent carriage drawn by four milk-white horses".[2] The enthusiasm displayed by the people at the coming of the Buddha to Sāvasti and the bringing of Visākā to the city are noteworthy.

For commerce merchants must have needed good roads, for they used to take a large number of cart loads of goods for trade from one city to another. References like the following are found in the scriptures : "He took 500 carts of merchandise to Rājagaha".[3] Market towns had been built near great cities. There was a market town near Jētavana.[4] Mithila possessed four market towns,[5] and the market town named Vehalinga was "opulent, wealthy, populous and thronged with people."[5]

The noises caused by traffic and other activities of cities were well known throughout the ages. Hence arose the idea that the prosperity of a city can be known by "the ten sounds". "The Royal city of Kusavathi resounded with the ten sounds of the noise of elephants, of horses, of chariots, of drums, of the tabor, of the vena, of singing, of cymbal, of the gong and the cry of 'eat, drink and be merry'."[6]

The king, nobles, ministers and rich merchants resided in the best part of the city. Some of them had three residences to suit the different seasons.[7] Keeping of peace and order in cities was entrusted to officers, whose chief was appointed by the king and entitled "the Lord Protector of the City".[8] The police supervision was entrusted to another officer known as "Governor."

"A robber was plundering the city. The King ordered the governor of the city to seize him. So in the night the governor posted men here and there in detachments."[9] Also, each city had its city-wardens[10] and tax-gatherers.[11]

1. *Dummedha Jātaka.*
2. *Vinilaka Jātaka.*
3. *Thera Gāta*—Rājadatta.
4. *Gutha Pana Jātaka.*
5. *Ghatīkara Sutta.*
6. *Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta.*
7. *Prince Siddhartha, Thera Gāthā*—Anuruddha, Yasa, Bhuta, Emperor Asoka.
8. *Chavaka Jātaka.*
9. *Kanavara Jātaka.*
10. *Maha-Ukussa Jātaka.*
11. *Gagga Jātaka.*

Town life in India was not new in the days of the Buddha. It had been known for centuries before the Buddha ; therefore cities had ample opportunities to improve through experiment and experience. The Buddha spoke of cities known as very ancient in his day. He said : "Dandaka, Kalinga, Mejjha, and Matunga were cities turned into wilderness in days gone by."[1]

Some suburbs of large towns contained reserved forests and gardens. The forests provided firewood for cooking and heat for the cold season. The gardens produced the fruit, vegetables and flowers for the city. Extensive fields of corn crops, especially of rice, surrounded most cities. Small settlements outside the cities had gradually turned into villages whose inhabitants depended on agriculture or manufacture for their living. The nearest cities were the buyers of their produce. Instances of such villages are mentioned in the scriptures. "The Brahamin village named Salindiya was on the east side of Rājagaha. The Bodhisathva was born in that village in a Brahamin farmer's family."[2]

"There was a village of carpenters not far from the city in which 500 carpenters lived ".[3] Near woods there were villages of hunters.[4] "The village of Opasada was teeming with life and abounding in grasslands, woodlands, water and cornlands ".[5] There were villages that stood as independent units with most of their necessaries supplied by the peasants themselves. Ancient villages were celebrated for their hospitality ; for it was considered that all teachers of religion and learned men who came within the precincts of a village are guests who were to be treated with honour and reverence.[5] The administration of villages and minor towns were left in the hands of responsible men usually sent from the capital city. So we find Anāta-Pindika absenting himself from the city in order to administer the village entrusted to his care. A few extracts from the scriptures will serve as brief descriptive notes of some prominent towns of Buddhist India.

Vesāli.—"At that time Vesāli was an opulent, prosperous town, populous, crowded with people, abundant with food. There were 7,777 storeyed buildings, 7,777 pinnacled buildings, 7,777 pleasure gardens and 7,777[6] lotus ponds. There were also the dancer and musician, Ambapāli, who was beautiful, graceful, pleasant, gifted with the highest beauty of complexion, well versed in dancing, singing, and vena (a lute)

1. *Upāli Sutta.*
2. *Suvannakakkata Jātaka.*
3. *Alinacitta Jātaka.*
4. J. IV., 257.
5. *Canki Sutta.*
6. 7777 was a form of expression—denoting a large number.

playing. . . . Through her, Vesāli became more and more prosperous. Merchants from Rājagaha went to Vesāli ".[1] In Mahavana gardens was a well-known park in Vesāli where there was a large building called the Gabled Hall.[2] Another hall there was known at the Hall of Truth.[3] This city also possessed a tank from which the royal families got water for ceremonial sprinkling.[4] " In those days Vesāli enjoyed marvellous prosperity. A triple wall encompassed the city, each wall a league distant from the next, and there were three gates with watch towers. In that city there were always 7,777 Rājas (rulers) to govern the kingdom, and a like number of viceroys, generals and treasurers."[5]

Kapilavasthu was the capital of the Sakyan kingdom. By this city was a wood known as the Great Wood.[6] The city had several parks. The Banyan Grove,[7] and the Fig Tree Park,[8] were two of the well-known parks. It was also noted for its palatial buildings. The Coronation Hall of the Kings in the city was also used for the celebration of royal weddings.[9] When the Sakyans built their New Assembly Hall it was opened by the Buddha. The ancient method of opening a building was getting a worthy person to use it for the first time.[10] It was the Assembly Hall that was used to welcome foreign princes or persons of renown.[11]

Kusināra was the capital of the Mallas.

Rājagaha was one of the most beautiful towns of ancient India, " with all its beautiful pleasaunces and woods, and open spaces and lovely lakes."[12]

Rājagaha was surrounded by hills. There was the Black Rock on Rishis' Hill,[13] the Vulture Peak,[14] and Giraggasamajja where hill-top fairs used to be held.[15] Sukarakhata Cave was on one of the hills.[16]

It was a well fortified city. We read of its defences which were being repaired.[17]

The well-known pleasure gardens at Rājagaha were Veluvana (Bamboo Park), Sattivana,[18] and the Mango Grove.[19] A tree planted by Ananda, the disciple of the Buddha, stood at the end of Sisters'

1. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
2. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga VI.
3. *Ekapanna Jātaka*
4. *Bhadda*-Sāla Jātaka
5. *Ekapanna Jātaka.*
6. *Maha Samaya Sutta.*
7. *Dakkhina Vibhanga Sutta.*
8. *Majjhima Nikāya* XVIII.
9. *Thera Gāthā*—Nanda.
10. *Sekha Sutta.*
11. *Bhadda-Sāla Jātaka.*
12. *Ganaka-Moggallāna Sutta.*
13. *Thera Gāthā*—Vaṅgisa.
14. *Theri Gāthā*—Citta.
15. *Thera Gāthā*—Sāriputta.
16. *Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta.*
17. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
18. *Theri Gāthā*—Subha.

Terrace.[1] In the city there were squares at which people preached or addressed the crowds.[1] In a prominent part of the city was the Royal rest-house.[2] There were eighteen monasteries round Rājagaha.[3] Also, the Brahamin village called Salindiya was towards the north-east of it.[4]

Savatthi, the capital of the Kingdom of Kosala, was noted for its prosperity and wealth. It had been one of the busiest cities. " Brahamins from diverse countries came to the city on business ".[5] There were towers on the city gates.[6] One tower was known as Ambala Tower.[7] It was a city noted for its palatial buildings of five or seven storeys. She surpassed other cities in her grandeur of large halls, residences and public buildings. The famous Jētawana Park was in its suburbs. There was a market town near Jētawana.[8]

Sāvatthi had four gates, three of which were named as the Eastern, Northern and Southern Gates. The great residence built by Lady Visākā for the Buddha was near the Eastern Gate.[9] The nobleman Anathapindika's house in the city had seven storeys and seven gates.[9] The King's palace and Lady Visākā's mansion were equally magnificent buildings in the city.[9]

Benares is one of the most ancient cities of India. It was the capital of the Kingdom. It was reputed as a seat of learning from very early times. Just as the other great cities, Benares had large buildings. tanks and pleasure gardens. There were halls of Bounty at each of the four gates and one in the middle of the city.[10] The lotus tank was looked after by a caretaker.[11] The deer park at Isipathana was near the city.[12] Benares was famous for its muslin.[13] She had clever craftsmen in ivory work.[14] It was customary for merchants of other towns to bring their merchandise to Benares.[15] " In Benares when the night-festival of Kattika was held the city was decorated and all people kept holiday. They put on their best attire on the occasion.[16]

Takkasila was the most famous seat of learning in ancient India. Jivaka went to learn under a " world renowned physician who at that time lived at Takkasila.[17] Rich parents sent their children to Takkasila to be taught by the famous teachers.

1. *Theri Gāthā*—Sukka.
2. *Maha Mangala Jātaka.*
3. *Cullahamsa Jātaka.*
4. *Salikedara Jātaka.*
5. *Assalayana Sutta.*
6. *Palayi Jātaka.*
7. *Sunaka Jātaka.*
8. *Gutha Pana Jātaka.*
9. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā.
10. *Cula Paduma Jātaka.*
11. *Paduma Jātaka.*
12. *Vinaya-Maha Vagga I.*
13. *Piya Jatika Sutta.*
14. *Kasava Jātaka.*
15. *Guttila Jātaka.*
16. *Puppharatta Jātaka.*
17. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.

Nalanda became the home of philosophers and scholars. The University of Nalanda with its lecture halls and lodgings for 10,000 resident students, was the seat for students. The University was endowed with the revenues of 100 villages.

The thick population of the ancient cities of India can be gathered from the allusions to them in the scriptures. Foreign writers who had visited ancient India make references to the largeness of population. Megesthenes describes Patalipura as a fortress with a garrison of a million armed men.

Fa Hien describes Purusapura, the capital of Gandhara, as dotted with a thousand monasteries.

" According to Megasthenes the mean breadth (of the Ganges) is 100 stadia and its least depth 20 fathoms. At the meeting of this river and another is situated Palibothra, a city eighty stadia in length and sixteen in breadth. It is of the shape of a parallelogram and is girded with a wooden wall, pierced with loopholes for the discharge of arrows. It has a ditch in front for defence and for receiving the sewage of the city . . . . The wall (of the city) was crowned with 570 towers, and had four and sixty gates ". (Strabo XV. 1–35–36).

Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Kin (Buddhist Records of Western World) gives the following account :

> " The towns and villages have inner gates ; the walls are wide and high ; the streets and lanes tortuous and the roads winding. The thoroughfares are dirty and the stalls arranged on both sides of the road with appropriate signs. Butchers, fishers, dancers, executioners, scavengers and so on, have their abodes without the city. In coming and going these persons are bound to keep on the left side of the road till they arrive at their homes. Their houses are surrounded by low walls and form the suburbs. The earth being soft and muddy, the walls of the town are mostly built of brick or tiles. The towers on the walls are constructed of wood or bamboo ; the houses have balconies and belvederes, which are made of wood, with a coating of lime or mortar and covered with tiles."

CHAPTER NINETEEN

KINGS AND RULERS

IN THE sixth century B.C. India was divided into a number of kingdoms and republics. Some of the minor kingdoms were semi-dependent on the powerful ones, while the others were independent. Kosala, Magadha, Udeni, Sakya, Vathsa, Kasi and Avanthi were the most powerful kingdoms. The republic of the Vajjians, and the federation of the Mallavas were equally powerful. Some of the less important kingdoms were Alvai, Kuru, Sivi, Kampila, Gandhara, Kalinga, Candahar, Vamsa and Damila.

According to *Digha Nikaya* the central region of the North was divided into seven states. There were the other states as the kingdoms:—

of Sakiyas	of Videhas
of Koliyas	of Bulis
of Mallas of Kusinara	of Bhaggas
of Mallas of Pava	of Moriyas
of Licchavis	of Kālāmas

According to another version the following sixteen are classed as great States :—

1. Angā	9. Kuru
2. Magadha	10. Pancala
3. Kāsi	11. Maecha
4. Kosala	12. Surasena
5. Vajji	13. Assaka
6. Malla	14. Avanti
7. Ceti	15. Gandhara
8. Vamsa	16. Kamboja

There had existed friendly inter-course between kings. They exchanged letters and presents.[1]

The extent of territory varied, land being added on or lost through conquests or kingdoms being united by succession, through marriage.[2] After a war the defeated kingdom generally undertook to pay a tribute

1. There were inter-marriages between the royal families of different kingdoms.
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Tissa.

to its conqueror and thereby acknowledged its allegiance. Yet the conqueror did not interfere with the government of the conquered kingdom. King Bimbisara of Magadha held rule and sovereignty over 80,000 villages. From time to time he held a conference of 80,000 governors of those villages.[1] The kingship was a hereditary right in most kingdoms. If a king died without an heir then the choice of the sovereign fell on the people. One of their methods was to delegate the royal elephant which was taken in procession to do the selection. The person before whom the elephant knelt down was chosen king. This method is analogous to casting lots, or the people thought that the instinct of the elephant was above corruption. Another method was to entrust the selection to physiognomists who found out the person worthy of the crown by the royal signs on his body.

"The King of Benares had been dead seven days. The family priest had performed funeral rites, and sent out the festal car for seven days as there was no heir to the throne. This car reached the gate of the pleasure garden. Along with it went the army of the four divisions, accompanied by the music of one hundred instruments. By observing the special marks on the feet of a person he was elected king."[2]

The coronation of a king was performed with great ceremony for which there was a special hall in the kingdom of the Sakyas known as the Coronation Hall.[3] Here is a brief description of a coronation. "When the kingdom had been offered to the Bodhisatta by the people, and when he had accepted it and been anointed king, the people decorated the town like a city of the gods and the royal palace like the palace of Indra. Entering the city, the Bodhisatta passed into the spacious hall of the palace and there seated himself in all his god-like beauty on his jewelled throne beneath a white umbrella of kingship. Round him in glittering splendour stood his ministers and brahamins and nobles, whilst sixteen thousand girls, fair as goddesses, sang and danced and gave music till the palace was filled with sounds like the ocean, when the storm bursts in thunder on its waters."[4]

The above passage also suggests that the kingship depended on the wish of the people ; before electing their king the people sometimes tested him. After a king's death, "his son was very young, so the people thought he could not be made king. Before they made him king they would test him."[5]

---

1. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga V.
2. *Darimukka Jātaka.*
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Nanda.
4. *Pancha Garu Jātaka.*
5. *Gamani Canda Jātaka.*

Depending on the choice of the people a king owed certain duties. For example :—

"A king ought to rule vigilant in all kingly duties to his subjects, like mother or father, forsaking all evil courses, never omitting the ten precepts of a king. When a king is righteous, those who surround him are righteous also".[1] The ancient idea that a king is the father of his people was repeated by Emperor Asoka in his Kalinga Edict I. :

> "All my people are my children. Just as for my offspring I desire that they may be united with all welfare and happiness of this world and the next, so do I desire it for all men, so that they might understand, 'the king is to us even as a father, he loves us even as he loves himself. We are to the king even as his children'."

Several passages in the scriptures speak of the duties of kings.

> "A king should remember the maxim that kings should not walk according to lust and other evil passions in ruling their kingdoms. Kings should never act without examining and knowing the whole matter."[2]

The following is an advice to a king :

> "Learning, honouring, respecting and revering the (*Dhamma*) Truth, with truth and righteousness as thy guide, protect thy people, army, nobles, servants, brahamins, householders and animals. Let no wrong-doing prevail. Whosoever is poor in thy kingdom, let wealth be given to him. You should hear spiritual teachers and bid them take up whatever is good. Observe the five precepts of abstaining from killing, stealing, unlawful sensual pleasures, falsehood and intoxicants."[3]

King's power was restricted. Once a king said : "In no way do all the subjects of my kingdom belong to me, nor am I their lord, only over those who rise against the sovereign and do wrong I am lord. Therefore, I cannot give you unrestricted power over the whole kingdom."[4]

The rulers were expected to protect their subjects with the four kinds of beneficence, namely, liberality, affability, impartiality and good rule.[5] In Buddhist India the ideal king is characterised by ten royal precedents, which consisted in charity, well disciplined righteous life, generosity, uprightness, compassion, reserved nature, unrevengefulness,

1. *Janasandha Jātaka.*
2. *Kāka Jātaka.*
3. *Chakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta.*
4. *Jatāka* I, 398.
5. *Janasandha Jātaka.*

harmlessness, patience and impartiality.[1] The five emblems of royalty were sword, white canopy, crown, slippers and fan.[2] There were also certain treasures known as royal treasures.[3]

Ancient kings of India took an active part in the government of the country, for which they were often carefully trained. Their time was well occupied with the duties of the State. Pasenadi, King of Kosala, once said : " Now, Sir, I must be going, for I have much to do and attend to."[4]

Emperor Asoka proclaimed this fact :

> " Thus saith King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods—For a long time past previously there was no dispatch of business and no reporting at all hours. This, therefore, I have done, namely, that at all hours and in all places—whether I am eating or am in the closed apartments, in the inner chamber, in the royal rancho on horseback, or in pleasure orchards, the reporters may report people's business to me. People's business I do at all places . . . . I am never satisfied with exertions or with dispatch of business. For the welfare of the whole world is an esteemed duty with me. And the root of that, again, is this, namely, exertion and dispatch of business. There is no higher duty than the welfare of the whole world. And what little effort I make—what is it for ?—that I may be free from debt to the creatures, that I may render some happy here and that they may gain happiness in the next world."—[Rock Edict VI.]

It was a common custom in those days for kings to send their sons to be educated under well-known teachers. So when in turn the sons succeeded their fathers, the kings had the necessary training and education. " When the son of the King of Benares " returned from his studies, the king granted a general pardon to all prisoners and gave him the vice-royalty ".[5] Another king entrusted to a separate courtier to teach his children what they ought to learn. Afterwards he made each son the governor of a province.[6]

The appointment of princes to responsible offices gave them opportunities of getting early experience in the art of government.

" Pussa, the son of a ruler of a province, was trained in all accomplishments of a youth."[7]

---

1. *Dasa-rāja-dhamma.*
2. *Dasaratha Jātaka.*
3. *Bālapaṇḍita Sutta.*
4. *Aṅgulimāla Sutta.*
5. *Janasandha Jātaka.*
6. *Saṃvara Jātaka.*
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Pussa.

The example of King Kusa shows that a royal prince was taught not only the art of government and military science, but he was a good musician, clever sculptor and a man accomplished in the sixty-four arts and sciences.[1] Certain members of the royal family specialised in some branch of knowledge. The adopted son of Prince Abhaya thought thus : " In these royal families, it is not easy to find one's livelihood without knowing an art ".[2] So he became a student of medicine under a " world famed physician in Takkasila ". " Vajjiputta, the son of a Licchavi Rāja at Vesāli, was a young man who became an expert in training elephants."[3]

Some kings had been very keen to improve their knowledge. " Maha-Kappina succeeded to the crown at his father's death. He, to extend his knowledge, would send men in the morning out of the four gates to cross roads, ordering them to stop scholars passing that way and to tell him.[4] When a great teacher or philosopher visited a kingdom the king would extend his hospitality to him. On occasions in which famous speakers addressed meetings the king with his courtiers would go to hear them. Even at the meetings of kings, their conversation was of an intellectual nature. " Once five kings, Pasenadi being one of them, were discussing which of the pleasures of sense was the highest."[5]

Five wishes of King Seniya Bimbisara were well-known :

The King said : "Formerly, Lord, when I was a boy, I had five wishes they are now fulfilled : to be consecrated king, may a Buddha, an enlightened teacher, come to my kingdom ; to do homage to him ; to be taught by him Doctrine ; and to understand his teaching."[6]

When a king wished to retire from his duties as a ruler, either owing to old age or because he wished to renounce worldly cares,[7] then he abdicated the throne in favour of his heir.[8]

Ancient kings did not despise their subjects. The people had a right to appeal to the king individually to get private wrongs redressed, or collectively in times of public danger or calamity. " The portals of the king's inner palace was beset by a huge crowd loudly shouting that there was a robber in the realm . . . . "Suppress him, Sire", they cried.[9] Instances of private appeals to the king were not uncommon. Visākā, the mother of Migāra, desirous of obtaining a favour, importuned

1. *Kusa Jātaka.*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Vajji-putta.
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Mahā Kappina.
5. *Saṅyutta Nikaya* III.
6. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
7. *Makhādeva Jātaka.*
8. *Vessantara Jātaka.*
9. *Aṅguli-Māla Sutta.*

King Pasenadi of Kosala. The king did not accede to her request.[1] Whenever the king used his prerogative, it was for the public good, otherwise the act of the ruler would be condemned as unrighteous and the people made a collective appeal.[2] The rulers of Buddhist India were not despots. They respected the wishes of the people and made the basis of their governments the welfare of the people. Kings did not depend entirely on their ministers for the good administration of the kingdom. When the king appeared before his people on formal occasions, he used to ask whether they had any complaints to make against the government. Not satisfied with this inquiry, the king himself informally or in disguise used to visit different parts of his kingdom to find out whether the people had any grievances. Once a "king handing over the government to his ministers and taking a chaplain with him traversed the kingdom of Kasi, in disguise, yet he found no-one with a complaint against the government "[3]

The king as a rule consulted his ministers and had confidence in them "Magadha King Seniya Bimbisara said to his minister in charge of general affairs : 'Go, good sir, and find out about this. When you have seen it, it shall be the same as if I myself had seen it '.[4] On important matters the king acted on the advice of his counsellors. "King Brahmadatta of Kasi, having entered Benares, convoked his ministers and counsellors and addressed them."[5]

The various services of the State demanded many ministers. Hence we read of the King's Treasurer,[6] Chaplain,[7] Administer of Justice,[8] a Chief Counsellor or Prime Minister,[9] and a "Price assessor",[10] among other officers of the State.

The "Price assessor's" duty was to make estimates of the values of things bought for the king or his household, so that they may be paid for without causing loss to the sellers of those articles.

Pillar Edict IV. of Asoka shows the confidence he had in Government servants.

"Thus saith King Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods : This Dhammalipi was caused to be written by me when I had been consecrated twenty-six years. The Rajukas have been set by me over people (consisting of) many hundred thousands of souls. Any

1. *Udāna.*
2. *Vessantara Jātaka.*
3. *Bikkha-Paramparā Jātaka.*
4. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VI.
5. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga IX.
6. *Theri Gāthā*—Bhadda Kuṇḍalakesa
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Sappadasa.
8. *Senaka Paṇḍita Jātaka.*
9. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka.*
10. *Thera Gāthā*—Malunkaya's son and Ajita.

reward or punishment by them has been placed by me under their sole control—why ?—in order that the Rajukas may perform their duties with confidence and without fear, cause welfare and happiness to the people of the provinces and confer benefits (upon them) . . . ."

The Kalinga edict shows that the Emperor sent high government officers every five years to inquire into the work of the judiciaries.

". . . . For this purpose has this document been here written : in order that the Mahamatras who are the City Judiciaries may be devoted to the eternal rule of conduct, and that causeless imprisonment or causeless harassment of the towns people may not take place. And for this purpose, I shall cause a Mahamatra to go forth on tour every five years, who will be neither harsh nor fiery, but gentle in action, so that being aware of this object the city judiciaries will act according to my instructions. . . . . When those Mahamatras go forth on tour, without neglecting their own function, they will mind this also, namely, whether judiciaries are acting according to the instructions of the king."

The kings of old lived in great splendour. They had three palaces to suit the different seasons. They had their golden thrones beneath the royal white (parasol) canopy decked with gems.[1]

" The King of Benares caused a pavilion adorned with jewels to be set up at the door, and at the time of eating he had this decorated, and there sat upon a royal dais made all of gold, under a white parasol. There were princesses all around him. He ate the food of hundred delicate flavours from a dish which cost a hundred thousand gold coins."[2]

They rode on elephants or in carriages drawn by horses.[3]

With the ladies of the court they visited pleasure gardens or parks on sunny afternoons.[4] They took part in the different festivals. "The festival of the elephants was prepared. A hundred elephants were set in array, with golden trappings, golden flags, all covered with a network of fine gold ; and all the palace court-yard was decked out."[5]

The kings were keen in attending to social services.

". . . . Thus saith Priyadarsin, Beloved of the gods : On the roads I have planted banyan trees. They will offer shade to man and beast. I have grown mango-orchards. I have caused wells to

1. *Ekapana Jātaka.*
2. *Duta Jātaka.*
3. *Vinilaka Jātaka.*
4. *Mātaṅga Jātaka.*
5. *Susuna Jātaka.*

be dug at every eight-*koses* ; and I have had rest-houses. I have made many watering sheds at different places for the enjoyment of man and beast. This enjoyment is, however, indeed, a trifle, because mankind has been blessed with many such blessings by the previous kings as by me. But I have done this with this intent, namely, that they may practise practices of the Dhamma."—[Pillar Edict VII.]

There was a popular conception of a " universal monarch " who appeared at very long intervals in the world's history. He possessed super-normal powers. At the birth of Prince Siddhartha some wise men predicted that he would be a " universal monarch " or a Buddha.

GOVERNMENT AND LAWS

I. Government

LAWS and governments of the different kingdoms in India were not alike. Yet there was the general tendency among the less developed states to copy the leading ones in important matters. When the Buddha taught in India there were republics and confederacies like that of the Mallas, there were democracies with elected monarchs and there were kingdoms with hereditary kings.

In large kingdoms there was a central government and local governments. The king and his ministers and counsellors formed the central government. The appointments of new ministers and counsellors were done by the king on the advice of the old counsellors and ministers. A clear instance of this is where a king, hearing the fame of the wisdom of a young man, was anxious to appoint him as a counsellor, yet the king's four old counsellors kept him off time after time, suggesting to the king that the young man's ability must be tested further.[1]

The administrative work was done by the king with the aid of his ministers. A king had counsellors apart from his ministers. In the *Thera Gāta* many persons in the city of Sāvatti were described as counsellors who evidently formed the legislative or consultative bodies. There are also instances where those described as counsellors had done administrative work.[1] From this it can be inferred that either the ministers were selected from the counsellors or in some kingdoms the counsellors did the work of the ministers.

The existence of the different assemblies is suggested by a passage in the scriptures which enumerates them. They are the assemblies (I) of nobles, (II) of Brahamins, (III) of heads of houses, (IV) of religious teachers and their followers, (V) of the four great regents, (VI) of the thirty-three gods, (VII) of Maras (VIII) and of Brahmas.[2] The last four are the assemblies of gods and "super-natural beings". There is also a reference to eighteen guilds of a city.[3]

1. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka.*
2. *Anangana Sutta.*
3. *Muga Pakkha Jātaka.*

Before matters of importance to the public were done, they were discussed in their proper assemblies. As for examples, it is recorded that five hundred Licchavi princes used to meet in their assembly hall to transact business of the state.[1] Also, when Ananda went to announce the passing away of the Buddha, Mallās of Kusināra were assembled in their Council Hall to discuss about the same matter.[2] There are other references. " The Mallās of Kusināra were assembled in the Council Hall on some public affair."[2]

When King Kosala sent a marriage proposal to the Sakyans, " on receipt of the message the Sakyans gathered together and deliberated."[3]

When the Brahamin house-holders were assembled in their meeting place to transact some matters, the Buddha with his disciples went to the Hall. The Brahamins thought " who were those recluses and what can they know about council rules ".[4] The quotation suggests the existence of rules to regulate the proceedings at special meetings. Some rules from the *Vinaya Pitaka* might be quoted to illustrate the procedure at the meetings of the Buddhist monks :

" To an assembly they do not come uninvited."[5]

At meetings the speakers stand up and address the audience.[6]

" A motion brought before an assembly had to be addressed to that assembly.[7]

" Certain protests were held ineffectual.[8]

If a formal act is performed unlawfully by a complete or an incomplete congregation, it is not valid, but the lawful acts performed by complete congregations were valid.[9]

The formal words ordinarily used in the election of an office bearer were as follows :—

" Let the venerable members of the assembly hear me. This assembly appoints the Venerable Dabba the Malla as regulator of lodgings and apportioner of rations. Whosoever of the venerable ones agrees that Dabba should be appointed, let him remain silent. Whosoever does not agree let him speak."[10]

This was repeated thrice and if the members were silent then the Venerable Dabba was declared appointed by the assembly.

1. *Cula Saccaka Sutta.*
2. *Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta.*
3. *Bhadda Sāla Jātaka.*
4. *Sanyutta* VIII.
5. *Udumbakarika Sihanāda Sutta.*
6. *Patika Sutta.*
7. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga I.
8. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga IX.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Vinaya*—Kulla Vagga IV.

When the house was divided in opinion, the matter was settled by the votes of the majority.[1] The three methods of taking votes were: the "secret method", the "whispering method", and the "open method". In the secret method the teller of votes made voting tickets of different colours, and as each voter came he said to him: "This is the ticket for the man of such an opinion. Take whichever you like. Do not show it to anybody". In the whispering method, the teller is to whisper to the voter. "This is the ticket for such an opinion. Take whichever you like". The taker of votes shall possess five qualities. He must be impartial, wise, without malice, without fear and able to perform his duty.[2] The meetings were conducted by a president. When one speaker addressed a special meeting he became the president, i.e., the chief of the assembly.

The Government of the early Indian kingdoms involved many responsible duties. There was division of labour, and division of responsibility. Each king had many ministers and other officers of the state. Their names themslves would suggest the nature of their duties. The prime minister of the kingdom of Magadha was Vassakara[3] and Jivaka was the chief minister to King Kosala.[4] Then there were a treasurer,[5] a chaplain,[6] and a steward. "Jotipala, the Lord High Steward, divided the land and appointed governors who were given instructions by him".[7] A special minister was in charge of general affairs.[8] There were the commander-in-chief of the army and other military officers.[9] Some cities had a "lord-protector" appointed by the king,[10] guards, wardens, and viceroys.[11] The finances of kingdoms were in the hands of special financial officers.[12]

"As the administration of the Government is founded on benign principles the executive is simple. The families are not entered on registers, and the people are not subject to forced labour. The private demesnes of the Crown are divided into four principal parts; the first is for carrying out the affairs of the State and providing sacrificial offerings; the second is for providing subsidies for the ministers and chief officers of State; the third is for rewarding men of distinguished

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Mahā Pari Nibbāna Sutta.*
4. *Ekapanna Jātaka* and *Samana Phala Sutta.*
5. *Mahā Sudassana Sutta.*
6. *Thera Gāthā*—Piṇḍola and Bhāradvāja.
7. *Mahā Govinda Sutta.*
8. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
9. *Mitta Gandhaka Jātaka.*
10. *Chāvaka Jātaka.*
11. *Mitta-Gandhaka Jātaka.*
12. *Chakkavatti Sutta.*

ability ; and the fourth is for charity to religious bodies, whereby the field of merit is cultivated."—[*Buddhist Records of the Western World* Book II.]

The government of the provinces was carried on by the governors appointed by the king. Those governors evidently followed the central government in matters of general policy. The nobleman, Anāthapindika, had the government of a province under him.[1] Consultations and conferences of the governors of the provinces took place from time to time.[2]

In the following extract the duties of the magistrates are described :

"(The City Magistrates) who have charge of the city are divided into six bodies of five each. The members of the first look after everything relating to the industrial arts. Those of the second attend to the entertainment of foreigners . . . . The third body consists of those who inquire when and how births and deaths occur, with a view not only of levying a tax, but also in order that births and deaths among both high and low may not escape the cognizance of government. The fourth class superintends trade and commerce. The fifth class supervises manufactured articles. The sixth and last class consists of those who collect the tenths of the prices of the article sold . . . . Next to the city magistrates there is a third governing body which directs military affairs."—(Strabo XV., 2. 50–52.)

II. Laws

The laws of Buddhist India were not the commands of despots. They were not imposed by kings on unwilling people. The principle under lying the laws was that they were for the good of the people and not for the benefit of an individual. Based on the advice of the counsellors and other assemblies the king and the ministers framed the laws. To judge from the manner in which the Buddha gave out his rules of conduct to his disciples, the ancient laws were not theoretical codes which anticipate crimes, but they were practical in so far as they were passed according to the circumstances which gave rise to the law. The laws were not kept secret by any religious or political sect, but were made public. The principal method of making the laws known to the public was to inscribe them on metal slabs, stones or rock pillars erected in public places.[3] In addition to this the new laws used to be

1. *Kālakanni Jātaka.*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.
3. Asoka's Edicts.

proclaimed by government officers. Also, emergency orders were proclaimed by a crier with beat of drum;[1] for instance, the Mallas of Kusinara issued a proclamation demanding the people to go forth to welcome the Buddha into their state.[2] There were also instances where the kings themselves initiated laws when they thought it was for the benefit of the people or to protect a sect of people who deserved such protection. One of such edicts was that "no one was to do any harm to those who were ordained."[3]

The different kinds of laws that existed in ancient India classified according to their origin are the edicts of the kings. The laws made by the king and his ministers in council, the customary laws known as "traditional laws". Case law having the force of laws, the edicts of the magistrates, military law and ecclesiastical laws which consisted of the rules and regulations laid down for the Buddhist monks and upheld by the government.

Buddhist India had no special laws for a privileged class. All subjects were alike before law. Once "the chaplain of King Kosala was driving to a village on his estate. He complained to the king that he was wounded by some carters. The carters were summoned, and the judges after examination found that the chaplain was to blame".[4] Here are the words of a powerful king on the subject. When asked what sentence he would give if a noble was a burglar, thief, house-breaker, footpad or adulterer, and if the king's officers caught him and brought him before him, he said: "I should put him to death, or confiscate his goods, or banish him, or otherwise deal with him as circumstances required, for the noble is now merged in the malefactor."[5]

Law took no advantage of the foreigners.

> "The judges also decide cases in which foreigners are concerned, with the greatest care, and come down sharply on those who take unfair advantage of them."—(Strabo XV., 1.35.)

The proceedings in a law-suit took place in public and after the trial the audience applauded when a clever judgment was given.[6] Special buildings had been erected for law courts. There are several references to court-houses and clever judgments.[7] The proceedings in a court were held to be legal when "they are carried out before qualified persons, according to law, in the presence of the litigant parties, after

1. *Illisa Jātaka.*
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VI.
3. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga I.
4. *Rathalathi Jātaka.*
5. *Madura Sutta.*
6. *Mahā Ummagga Jātaka* and *Sēnaka Jātaka.*
7. *Ibid.*

the accused person has been heard ".[1] This and other passages suggest that an accused person is given a fair chance to defend himself. "Reading the Charge" was a preliminary step of the trial.[1] Once a person of influence plotting to kill another said : "How can we put him to death without having found him guilty of some great crime ?"[2] At trials counter-charges had been allowed.[3] Getting evidence was an important part of a trial. King Kosala once said : "I have been sitting in the Judgment Hall and saw how eminent nobles and Brahamins and burgesses and men of authority owning great treasure, great wealth, immense aids to enjoyment, immense supplies of goods and corn, deliberately told lies through their worldly desires."[4] Those who gave false evidence were termed ignoble,[5] and often punished."

As an instance of unrighteous speech, it is explained that persons sometimes uttered falsehoods. "When cited to give testimony before an assembly or village meeting, or family council, or royal household, or his guild, he may say that he knows, when he does not know, or that he does not know when he knows, or that he saw when he did not see, or that he did not see when he did see."[6]

The professional lawyers[7] evidently advised their clients and helped them in the conduct of law-suits. Unnecessary interruptions during the course of a trial were discouraged. Pasenadi, King of Kosala, said : "While I am hearing a case, people interrupt the proceedings. I have to forbid interruption while the case is on, and to tell them to wait till it is settled."[8]

The judges were appointed by the king. There were times when the king himself acted as a judge. The duty of a judge was explained as "to judge a cause with justice and impartiality."[9] A judge was once bribed to defraud the rightful owners. A minister of the king who heard of it went to the court-house and reversed the sentence in that case.[10]

The judge decided cases without the aid of a jury. In the administration of justice rigid adherence to law did not exclude equitable or moral considerations. The King of Kosala was described as having passed sentence in a very difficult case involving moral wrong.[11] Also, the judges had often respected precedent, as the following quotation

1. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga I.
2. *Dhammaddhaja Jātaka.*
3. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga IV.
4. *Saṃyutta* III.
5. *Vasala Sutta.*
6. *Saleyyaka Sutta.*
7. *Gagga Jātaka.*
8. *Dhamma-cetiya Sutta.*
9. *Rajovāda Jātaka.*
10. *Dhammaddhaja Jātaka.*
11. *Rajovāda Jātaka.*

shows : "He caused a book of judgments to be written and said, 'by observing this book you should settle suits'".[1] The different kinds of verdicts had been—a summary verdict with parties present, a verdict of innocence or of insanity and a verdict of guilt, or verdict on confession of guilt.[2] There were appeals from judgments, the final appeal being to the king. In exceptional cases requiring special remedies or redress there was a public appeal by the citizens appearing before the king's palace.

Punishments depended on the nature of the crimes. The chief crimes were murder, burglary, robbery, and adultery.[3] Possession of stolen goods was a crime.[4] The punishments had been capital punishment, banishment, imprisonment, whipping, confiscation of goods and fines. A person was outlawed by shaving him and pouring ashes over his head.[5] When the punishments were meant to be deterrent, they were carried out in public. "Once a robber was plundering the city. When he was captured and condemned, the governor of the city had his arms tightly bound behind him, and having tied a wreath of red kanavera flowers about his neck, and sprinkled brick dust on his head, had him scourged with whips in every square, and led to the place of execution to the music of harsh-sounding drums."[6]

Punishment for slander was a fine.[7] Arresting criminals and suppressing crimes had been considered a public duty. So the robbers and other criminals arrested by ordinary citizens used to be brought before the proper authorities.[8]

In laws relating to property, transfer of immovable property required formal acts or ceremonial rites. There was also a distinction between communal property, public property and private property. Communal property belonged to a class of persons such as the property given to the Buddhist Order. Any member of the Order had common rights in such property. Public property such as parks, cemeteries and woods were for the general use of the public. Different individuals including the king had private property. The landlords granted their lands to tenants who held them, in some cases, in hereditary succession.[9] The tenants held the land in payment of a rent to the land owners. The property went to the descendants as heirs at the death of the owner.[10] If there were no heirs, it went to the Crown. "At Sāvatti a miser

1. *Tundila Jātaka.*
2. *Samagama Sutta.*
3. *Maha Dukka Khandha Sutta.*
4. *Thera Gāthā*—Revata.
5. *Ambattha Sutta.*
6. *Kanavara Jātaka.*
7. *Ubhatobhattha Jātaka.*
8. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.
9. *Thera Gāthā*—Herannakani.
10. *Thera Gāthā*—Punnamasa.

millionaire died without an heir. His wealth, amounting to eight millions in gold, went to the king."[1] The ceremonial rite in alienation of property can be noticed in the giving away of Vēluvana pleasure garden. The king took a golden vessel of water and pouring the water said to the Buddha, " I give up this Vēluvana pleasure garden, Lord, to the fraternity of Bhikkhus with the Buddha at its head ".[2]

Damages were granted for injury done to goods under another man's watch and care.[3]

Laws of a nation are important clues to discover the special lines in which national enterprise was directed. Also, with the development of a legal system fine distinctions begin to be drawn and legal principles become more intricate and subtle. In Buddhist India law had reached that fineness and subtlety. For instance, law relating to contracts appear to have developed a great deal. A contract was taken as complete when there was an offer followed by an acceptance. When Anāthapindika offered to buy the famous Jētawana park for a residence for the Buddha, the owner said that it will not be sold unless the buyer could pave it with gold coins as its price. Anāthapindika offered to do so and contended that the contract was complete. The defendant pleaded that he meant not to sell it. This case which must have been a sensational one in its day, was decided in favour of the plaintiff on the ground that the contract was complete on the acceptance of the price named by the owner.[4]

1. *Saṅyutta* III.
2. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga.
3. *Gahapati Jātaka.*
4. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga VI.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

ARMY AND WAR

A COMPLETE army in ancient India consisted of four sections. There were the squadron of elephants, the cavalry, infantry and the war-chariots.[1] Elephants had special armour with shields for their trunks.[2] Fighting from chariots or from elephants' back was with missile weapons such as javelins and arrows. These facts are corroborated by the Greek and Chinese writers.

> "There are royal stables for the horses and elephants, and also a royal magazine for the arms, because the soldier has to return his arms to the magazine, and his horse and his elephant to the stables. They use the elephants without bridles. The chariots are drawn on the march by oxen, but the horses are led along by a halter, that their legs may not be galled and inflamed, nor their spirits damped by drawing chariots. In addition to the charioteer, there are two fighting men who sit up in the chariot beside him. The war elephant carries four men—three who shoot arrows and the driver."—Strabo XV. 2.50–52.

> "There are four divisions of the army viz., (1) the infantry; (2) the cavalry; (3) the chariots; (4) the elephants. The elephants are covered with strong armour, and their tusks are provided with sharp spears. A leader in a car gives the command, whilst two attendants on the right and left drive his chariot, which is drawn by four horses abreast. The general of the soldiers remains in his chariot; he is surrounded by a file of guards who keep close to his chariot wheels."

> "The cavalry spread themselves in front to resist an attack, and in cases of defeat they carry orders hither and thither. The infantry by their quick movements contribute to the defence. These men are chosen for their courage and strength. They carry a long spear and a great shield; sometimes they hold a sword or a sabre, and advance to the spot with impetuosity. All their weapons of war are sharp and pointed. Some of them are these: spears, shields, bows,

1. *Valodaka Jātaka.* 2. *Danta Bhūmi Sutta.*

arrows, swords, sabres, battle-axes, lances, halberds, long javelins, and various kinds of slings. All these they have used for ages."—Records of the Western World Bk. II.

Every army has its band to produce martial music from tom-toms, kettle drums, conches and drums.[1] Each section of the army had its commander and its subordinate officers. The whole army was under its commander-in-chief. When the king led the forces he acted as the commander-in-chief. The commanders and other officers were well trained or experienced men ; for they had to learn the different methods of fighting under famous teachers. The training of the army was done by the commanders, who " drilled the soldiers at night explaining them the art of warfare ".[2] Drawing up of armies in battle array on special occasions was a public spectacle. It was usually done for numbering the forces or for review.[3]

In Buddhist kingdoms there was no compulsory military service, and even those who had joined the army were free to leave the service. When the soldiers of the army began to leave their service and join the Buddhist Order, at the request of the king, the Buddha advised his disciples not to ordain a disciple under the service of the king without the king's permission.[4] Some kingdoms employed mercenary soldiers. When King Kosala favoured the foreign soldiers, his warriors neglected a fight.[5]

Athletic accomplishments had been a qualification to join the army. Vīra, the son of a minister of King Pasenadi, acquired athletic accomplishments and became a warrior.[6] Piyanjaha, a Licchavi prince who was mad for war, was an unconquered fighter.[7] Personal merit counted for promotions in the army. Sōna, the son of a landed proprietor, worked up his way to become the commander-in-chief of the forces.[8] There had been many warriors of fame such as Siha,[9] Bandhula,[10] and Upananda.[11] When a warrior had earned fame he had opportunities of getting great salaries in royal service. Also skilled archers had been employed by kings at great expense.[12] Each army had " leech experts " to deal with arrow wounds, for it had not been unusual to use poisoned arrows.

1. *Danta Bhūmi Sutta.*
2. *Vaddhaki Sūkara Jātaka.*
3. *Vinaya*—Pakittiya Rules.
4. *Vinaya*—MahāVagga.
5. *Dhumakari Jātaka.*
6. *Thera Gāthā*—Vīra.
7. *Thera Gāthā*—Piyanjaha.
8. *Thera Gātha*—Sona Potiriyaputta.
9. *Thera Gāthā*—Sīha.
10. *Bhadda-Sāla Jātaka*
11. *Gōpaka Moggallāna Sutta.*
12. *Asadisa Jātaka.*

The chief weapons used in ancient warfare were sword and buckler, bow and arrows,[1] shield, lance, long-shafted spear, and javelin.[2] Two kinds of bows, known as "long-bows" and "cross-bows" were in use. The shaft of the arrow was made of wild reed or plant shoot feathered with plumes. The gut used for binding the shaft was taken from ox, buffalo, hart or monkey. The arrow was plain or barbed with horn or iron or calf's tooth or with an oleander thorn.[3] The nature of some of the weapons can be inferred from the descriptions of weapons attributed to mythical persons. Sakka, the King of the gods, had a circular weapon (*Chakra-āudha*). Yama, the King of the Worlds of Torture, had a weapon in the shape of a cobra, and Māra, the Evil One, had a huge ring of mighty force for destructive purposes.

Those mythical weapons could not have been purely imaginary. The ideas must have been based on some forms of weapons in real existence.

The *Indika of Arrian* (Chapter XVI.) contains a description of ancient weapons :

"The foot-soldiers carry a bow made of equal length with the man who bears it. This they rest upon the ground, and pressing against it with their left foot thus discharge the arrow, having drawn the string far backward ; for, the shaft they use is little short of being three yards long, and there is nothing which can resist an Indian archer's shot—neither shield nor breastplate, nor any stronger defence if such there be. In their left hand they carry bucklers made of undressed ox-hide, which are not so broad as those who carry them, but are about as long. Some are equipped with javelins instead of bows, but all wear a sword, which is broad in the blade but not longer than three cubits, and this when they engage in close fight (which they do with reluctance) they wield with both hands, to fetch down a lustier blow. The horsemen are equipped with two lances called '*Saunia*' and with a shorter buckler than that carried by the foot soldiers. But they do not put saddles on their horses, nor do they curb them with bits like the bits in use among the Greeks or the Kelts, but they fit on round the extremity of the horses mouth a circular piece of stitched raw ox hide studded with pricks of iron or brass pointing inwards but not very sharp."

The three methods of drawing up an army in battle array were known as 'the lotus army', the 'wheel army' and the 'wagon army'.

1. *Angulimāla Sutta.*
2. *Danta Bhūmi Sutta.*
3. *Cuta-Malunkya Sutta.*

The 'lotus army' consisted in arranging the forces, so that the commanders be in the centre of the army and the soldiers were arranged as petals of a lotus, projecting outwards. When the forces were arranged in a circle with some lined as spokes of a wheel, the commanders remained in the centre. This was called the 'wheel army'. The arrangement in a rectangular form with two wings on either side was known as the 'wagon army'.[1]

The following description of a fight is noteworthy :

"It is because of selfish cravings, that men, girding on sword and buckler, bow and sheaf of arrows, charge in battle array, while arrows and javelins hurtle through the air, and swords flash and hack. With arrows and spear they deal wounds, with their swords they hew off heads, so that men may come by their deaths or deadly hurt. Men charge up slippery bastions while arrows and javelins hurtle through the air. The besieged pour down blazing embers on the besiegers and crush them with the falling portcullis."[2]

When the battle was fought and won, those immune from any punishment were those who had renounced the household life, i.e., the priests and recluses, those entirely devoted to intellectual pursuits, i.e., Brahmins, patients, aged parents, women and children.

According to the following passage husbandmen also come under the privileged classes :

"For whereas among other nations it is usual, in the contests of war, to ravage the soil, and thus to reduce it to an uncultivated waste, among the Indians, on the contrary, by whom husbandmen are regarded as a class that is sacred and inviolable, the tillers of the soil, even when battle is raging in their neighbourhood, are undisturbed by any sense of danger, for the combatants on either side in waging the conflict make carnage of each other, but allow those engaged in husbandry to remain quite unmolested. Besides, they neither ravage an enemy's land with fire, nor cut down its trees."—Fragment I (Diod II. 35–42). The Indika of Megesthenes.

After conquest the annexation of a country was of rare occurrence. The conquered country often undertook to pay a yearly tribute to the conquerors. With the payment of that tribute the kingdom was left to govern itself.

---

1. *Vaddhaki-Sukara Jātaka.* 2. *Mahā Dukkha Khanda Sutta.*

The Buddhist influence had been to suppress militarism and to propagate peace and friendship among nations. The Buddhist monarchs are expected to act according to the Buddha's teaching that " hatred cannot be overcome by hatred but by love ".[1] The Buddhists, if they fight at all, fight for defensive purposes only.

1. *Dhammapada*.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

BUDDHIST INDIA was by no means a purely agricultural country. She had many industries and manufacturers. Some villages had earned the name of carpenters' village or a hunters' village owing to the occupation of the people. There were certain districts noted for agriculture. In the suburbs of cities there were corn fields ; orchards and reserved woods. Near each city there were market towns because the city itself was not convenient for the many merchants who visited from other kingdoms to come to the city itself in their caravans.

Commerce, manufacture and agriculture were the chief sources of India's wealth at that time. There had been regular trade on a large scale between the great cities of the kingdoms. Merchants took 500 cart loads of merchandise to their trading centres or cities.[1] A leader of a caravan was a man of special talent among merchants.[2] The horse dealers brought their horses from the north.[3] The merchants from Kāsi brought their cloth[4] and Benares sent her famous muslins and other manufactures.[5] There were also pedlars and hawkers of needles, trinkets and other articles.[6]

Commerce was not mere individual effort, for there had been the collective enterprise of not less than eighteen guilds in one city. Skilled workers such as mariners, garlandmakers, caravan traders, mass-troopers, masons, blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, etc., belonged to those eighteen guilds.[7] At another city a rich man was described as having done "good service both to the King and to the Merchants' guild."[8] Rich merchants of cities had already formed themselves into a class that they were designated as "members of merchant families."[9]

Although the overland trade was chiefly confined to distributing goods by caravans, there had been a considerable amount of over-sea trade. There are references to voyages and sea faring vessels.[10]

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Mahākāla.
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Punna.
3. *Suhanu Jātaka.*
4. *Sañyutta* XV.
5. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
6. *Sañyutta* XV and *Suci Jātaka*
7. *Muga Pakkha Jātaka.*
8. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
9. *Theri Gāthā*—Isidasi and *Thera Gāthā*—Mahā Kāla.
10. *Sañyutta* XXII.

" Certain merchants of Kasi got an experienced crew and started a voyage."[1]

" Then it came into his mind to provide a ship and do business with it."[2]

" A certain man from Kasi country who had been turned out of doors by his parents as an incorrigible had made his way to a sea-port, where he embarked on the ship-board as a sailor's drudge."[3]

" There was a sea-port town named Bharakaccha. At that time, the Bodhisatta was born into the family of a master mariner there. He grew up with great distinction; and even when he was no more than sixteen years old, he had gained a complete mastery over the art of seamanship. Afterwards, when his father died, he became the head of the mariners, and plied the mariners' calling : he was wise and full of intelligence. With him abroad no ship ever came to harm."[4]

Some of the voyages might have been long, for " a disciple of the Buddha took passage on board the ship ; and a week later the ship was wrecked in mid-ocean ".[5] Again, " one ship sailed for four months with 700 people on board the ship."[6]

The large number of occupations in which people had been engaged suggests the various kinds of manufacture. There were workers in metal, smiths,[7] copper-smiths, silver-smiths and gold-smiths,[8] stone cutters,[9] wood-cutters,[10] workers in ivory,[11] basket makers,[12] rush-plaiters[13] and garland makers.[14]

Some families had followed certain trades. " There was a village of carpenters not far from the city in which 500 carpenters lived. They would go up the river in a vessel and enter the forest where they would shape beams and planks for house-building and put together the framework of one storey or two storey houses, numbering all the pieces from the main post onwards : These then they brought down to the river bank, and put them all aboard, then rowing down stream they would build houses to order as it was required of them."[15] The

1. *Dhammaddhaja Jātaka.*
2. *Catu-dvara Jātaka.*
3. *Dadhi-Vahana Jātaka.*
4. *Supparaka Jātaka.*
5. *Sīlānisaṃsa Jātaka.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Suci Jātaka.*
8. *Theri Gāthā*—Subha.
9. *Babbu Jātaka.*
10. *Thera Gāthā*—Chakkhupāla.
11. *Kasava Jātaka.*
12. *Gamani Canda Jātaka.*
13. *Theri Gāthā*—Sumangala's mother.
14. *Upāli Sutta.*
15. *Alina-Citta Jātaka.*

carpenter, the washer-man, the hair-dresser, the tailor and the shoe-maker were then known as "the five workmen". Men and women often worked for wages.[1] Also some people earned their living as clerks of the signet, clerk of accompt, computer, estate agent, purvey of herd-manager, archer, member of the royal household.[2]

The ordinary crafts as mentioned in *Samanna-phala Sutta* are : mahouts, horsemen, charioteers, archers, standard-bearers, camp marshals, camp followers, high military officers, military scouts, brave warriors, champions, warriors in buck-string, home-born servants, cooks, barbers, bath attendants, confectioners, garland-makers, washermen, weavers, basket-makers, potters, mathematicians and accountants. Evidently these were occuptations connected with the King's Court. Besides these there were many other occupations and industries. Under Buddhist influence certain trades began to be considered immoral. Selling animals for slaughter, and the sale of harmful weapons, flesh, intoxicants and poison were known as the "forbidden trades".[3] There were also twenty-one unlawful ways of earning a living.

The fertility of the soil of the Ganges and Indus valleys was well known. In *Strabo* (xv.i.13.p. 690) it is written :

"As Erosthenes states, India is watered by the summer rains, and the plains are overflowed. During these rains, accordingly, flax is sown and millet, also sesamum, rice, and *bosmorum* and in the winter time wheat, barley, pulse and other esculent fruits unknown to us."

Megesthenes also had pointed out the prosperity of India :

"India has many huge mountains which abound in fruit trees of every kind and many vast plains of great fertility—more or less beautiful, but all alike intersected by a multitude of rivers. The greater part of the soil, moreover, is under irrigation, and consequently bears two crops in the course of the year. It teems at the same time with animals of all sorts.

The inhabitants, in like manner, having abundant means of subsistance, exceed in consequence the ordinary stature and are distinguished by their proud bearing. They are also found to be well skilled in the arts, as might be expected of men who inhale a pure air

1. *Kummasahinda Jātaka* and *Bandha-nāgara Jātaka.*
2. *Maha Dukkha Khandha Sutta.*
3. *Sigālovāda Sutta*

and drink the very finest water. And while the soil bears on its surface all kinds of fruits which are known to cultivation, it has also underground numerous veins of all sorts of metals, for it contains much gold and silver, and copper and iron in no small quantity, and even tin and other metals which are employed in making articles of use and ornament, as well as the implements and accoutrements of war.

In addition to cereals, there grows throughout India much millet . . . and much pulse of different sorts and rice . . . as well as many other plants useful for food, of which most grow spontaneously . . . .

It is accordingly affirmed that famine has never visited India, and that there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food."—Fragment I (*Diod* II. 35–42) from the fragments of the *Indika* of Megesthenes collected by Dr. Schwanbeck.

Agricultural products formed important articles of merchandise. Some lands had been allotted by their owners to tenants for cultivation " Kosiyagotta held an estate of 1000 acres where he grew rice. He gave the land in charge of his men, to one fifty, to another sixty, and thus distributed among them 500 acres.[1] The crops from some fields had been large." One land owner had " a thousand waggon loads of the best rice thrashed out and stored up in his overflowing granaries."[2]

It is very difficult to get an accurate idea of the wages and salaries paid in Buddhist India. It is evident that money was not scarce. It may be inferred that the people were well paid for their services. An archer under the service of a king received 100,000 gold coins a year.[3] A hundred gold coins were paid daily for reciting to a king at dinner.[4] Another king gave a Brahamin a daily allowance of 500 gold coins.[5] A doctor got his fee as a present after he cured his patient. The renowned Jivaka received 16,000 from a rich family for curing a lady's chronic disease in the head.[6]

The generosity of some people had cost 600,000 gold coins daily.[7] Jetavana was bought a price equivalent to the amount of gold coins which would cover its area.[8] The gate towers of the residence at Jetavana had cost 90,000,000 gold coins.[9] Lady Visaka's wedding dress also cost lakhs.[10] A pair of sandals presented to the Buddha was worth

1. *Salikedara Jātaka.*
2. *Asampadana Jātaka.*
3. *Asadisa Jātaka.*
4. *Saṅyutta* III.
5. *Ghotamukka Sutta.*
6. *Vinaya*—Mahā Vagga VIII.
7. *Cuiapaduma Jātaka.*
8. *Vinaya*—Culla Vagga VI.
9. *Palayi Jātaka.*
10. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā.

a thousand and those presented to two disciples were worth five hundred.[1] The ear jewellery of a certain land owner was worth a crore[2] through which he earned the name of "the crore eared." The fortune of the son of a councillor was estimated at 800,000,000.[3] There had been many millionaires. Five noblemen of the kingdom of Kosala had unlimited wealth.[4]

According to Buddhist scriptures, the method of taxation is to levy taxes without causing hardships, "just as the bee that takes the pollen without harming the flower." This fact is corroborated in the Chinese records :

> "In this way the taxes on the people are light, and the personal service required of them is moderate. Each one keeps his own worldly goods in peace, and all till the ground for their subsistence. Those who cultivate the royal estates pay a sixth part of the produce as tribute. The merchants who engage in commerce come and go in carrying out their transactions. The river-passages and the road barriers are open on payment of a small toll. When the public works require it, labour is exacted but paid for. The payment is in strict proportion to the work done.
>
> The military guard the frontiers or go out to punish the refractory. They also mount guard at night round the palace. The soldiers are levied according to the requirements of the service ; they are promised certain payments and are publicly enrolled. The governors, ministers, magistrates and officials have each a portion of land consigned to them for their personal support."—*The Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Bk. II., 16.

Ancient India had gold as the medium of exchange. The standard gold coin was called "Kahapanna." There was silver coins[5] as well as copper coins. Some coins had punch marks evidently to signify the owner. The chief symbols of the coins of Buddhist India were Buddhist monument (*dagoba*) the Bo-tree, the lotus flower, sun and the elephant, the snake, lion and the wheel. These symbols have a significance among Buddhists. The shape of the coins were mostly square, or oblong. The ancient method of safeguarding money and treasures was to fill them in iron pots and keep them in cellars or to bury them.[6]

1. *Sankha Jātaka.*
2. *Thera Gāthā*—Sona Kotikanna.
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Bhaddaji.
4. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*—Visākā.
5. *Ghotamkha Sutta.*
6. *Brahachatta Jātaka.*

The luxury in which the people lived also shows the wealth of the times. The rich people had three residences to suit the seasons of the year.[1] Some of the mansions were seven storeys high and had parks or pleasure gardens beside them. There were houses with staircases decorated with gems,[2] and among ornaments of a house were golden statues.[3] The chariots were adorned with jewels and gold.[4] The rich had large establishments of retainers.[5]

---

1. *Thera Gāthā*—Yasa and Sona.
2. *Sūkara Jātaka.*
3. *Thera Gāthā*—Mahā Kassapa.
4. *Mayhaka Jātaka.*
5. *Thera Gāthā*—Raṭṭhapāla.